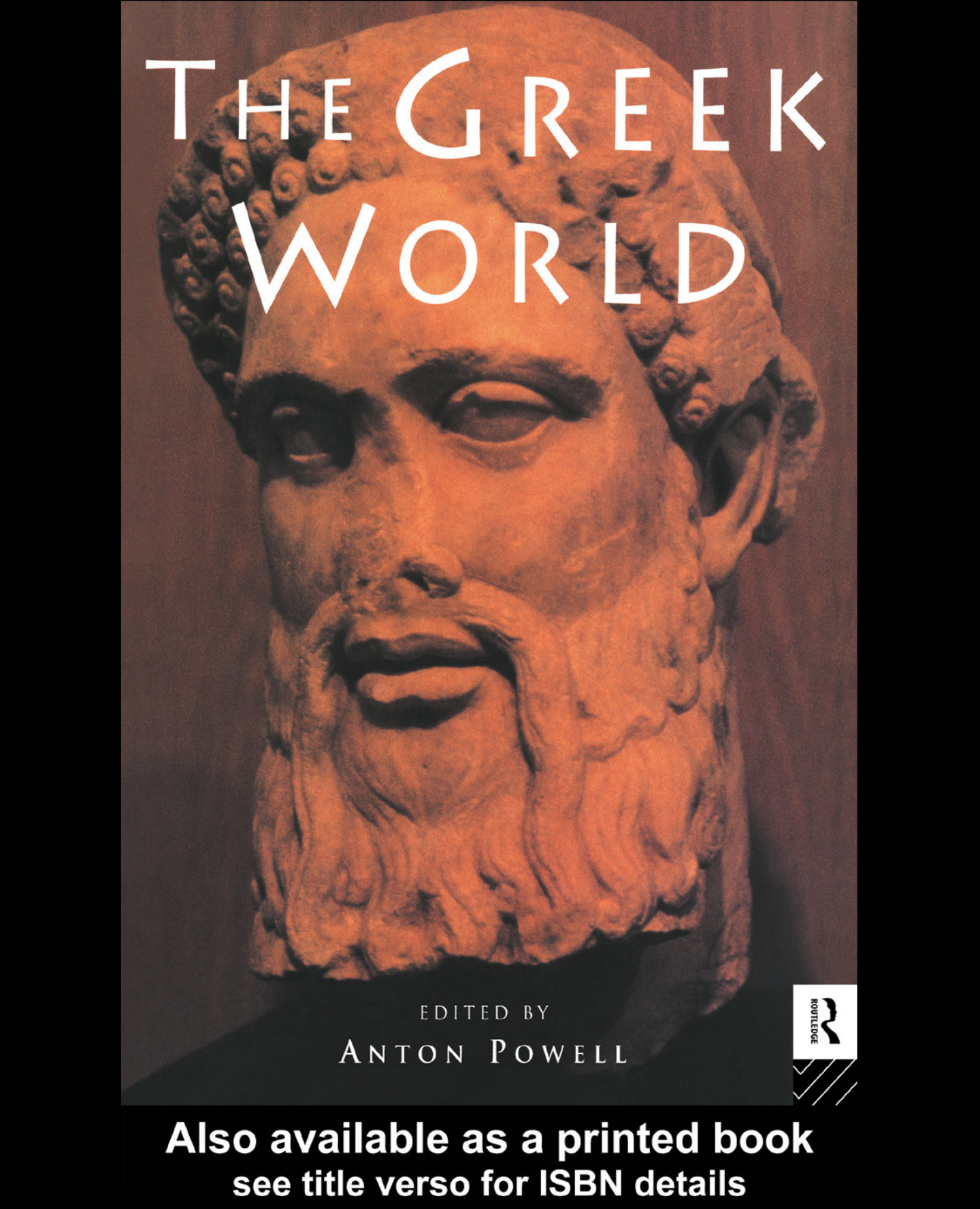


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THE GREEK WORLD

EDITED BY
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THE GREEK WORLD



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Edited by

Anton Powell



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ABBREVIATIONS



<i>AA</i>	<i>Archäologischer Anzeiger</i>
<i>ABSA</i>	<i>Annual of the British School at Athens</i>
<i>AC</i>	<i>L'antiquité classique</i>
<i>AJA</i>	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
<i>AJPh</i>	<i>American Journal of Philology</i>
<i>AK</i>	<i>Antike Kunst</i>
<i>AncSoc</i>	<i>Ancient Society</i>
<i>AncW</i>	<i>The Ancient World</i>
<i>Annales (ESC)</i>	<i>Annales (économies, sociétés, civilisations)</i>
<i>APF</i>	<i>Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete</i>
<i>ASMG</i>	<i>Atti e Memorie della Società Magna Grecia</i>
<i>BCH</i>	<i>Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique</i>
<i>BICS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London</i>
<i>BM</i>	<i>British Museum</i>
<i>CAH</i>	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
<i>CE</i>	<i>Chronique d'Égypte</i>
<i>CIG</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum</i>
<i>CIL</i>	<i>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</i>
<i>CJ</i>	<i>The Classical Journal</i>
<i>CPh</i>	<i>Classical Philology</i>
<i>ClAnt</i>	<i>Classical Antiquity</i>
<i>C&M</i>	<i>Classica et Mediaevalia</i>
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
<i>CR</i>	<i>Classical Review</i>
<i>CRAI</i>	<i>Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres</i>
<i>CW</i>	<i>The Classical World</i>
<i>DK</i>	H.Diels (ed.), revised W.Kranz, <i>Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker</i> , 1961
<i>FGH</i>	F.Jacoby (ed.) <i>Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , 1923–
<i>FHG</i>	C.Müller (ed.) <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> , 1841–70

<i>GGM</i>	C.Müller (ed.) <i>Geographici Graeci Minores</i> , 1855–61
<i>GIF</i>	<i>Giornale Italiano di Filologia</i>
<i>G&R</i>	<i>Greece and Rome</i>
<i>GRBS</i>	<i>Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies</i>
<i>HSCPb</i>	<i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i>
<i>HTbR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
<i>HCT</i>	A.W.Gomme, A.Andrewes and K.J.Dover, <i>A Historical Commentary on Thucydides</i> , 1945–
<i>ICS</i>	<i>Illinois Classical Studies</i>
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptions Graecae</i> , 1873–
<i>JARCE</i>	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
<i>JEA</i>	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
<i>JHS</i>	<i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i>
<i>JRS</i>	<i>Journal of Roman Studies</i>
<i>LCM</i>	<i>Liverpool Classical Monthly</i>
<i>LP</i>	E.Lobel and D.Page (eds) <i>Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta</i> , 1955
<i>LSJ</i>	H.G.Liddell, R.Scott and H.S.Jones, <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th edn, 1940
<i>MDAI</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts</i>
<i>MDAIK</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Abteilung Kairo)</i>
<i>MDAI (R)</i>	<i>Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts (Römische Abteilung)</i>
<i>MH</i>	<i>Museum Helveticum</i>
<i>ML</i>	R.Meiggs and D.Lewis (eds) <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> , 1969
<i>MS</i>	Medieval Studies, Toronto, Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies
<i>MSS</i>	Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft
<i>MW</i>	R.Merkelbach and M.L.West (eds) <i>Fragmenta Hesiodica</i> , 1967
<i>OCT</i>	Oxford Classical Text
<i>OGIS</i>	<i>Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i> , 1903–5
<i>PBSA</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Athens</i>
<i>PBSR</i>	<i>Papers of the British School at Rome</i>
<i>PCPhS</i>	<i>Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society</i>
<i>PG</i>	J.P.Migne <i>et al.</i> (eds) <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeco-Latina</i> , 1857–
<i>PMG</i>	D.L.Page (ed.) <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> ,
<i>P.Oxy.</i>	<i>The Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> , 1898–
<i>PP</i>	<i>La Parola del Passato</i>
<i>P&P</i>	<i>Past and Present</i>
<i>PSI</i>	<i>Papiri Greci e Latini, Pubblicazioni della Società italiana per la ricerca dei papiri greci e latini in Egitto</i> , 1912–
<i>QS</i>	<i>Quaderni di Storia</i>
<i>QUCC</i>	<i>Quaderni Urbinati di Cultura Classica</i>

<i>RE</i>	<i>Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>REA</i>	<i>Revue des études anciennes</i>
<i>RFIC</i>	<i>Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica</i>
<i>RbM</i>	<i>Rheinisches Museum</i>
<i>RIDA</i>	<i>Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité</i>
<i>RIPh</i>	<i>Revue internationale de philosophie</i>
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , 1923–
<i>SIG</i>	<i>Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum</i> , 1915–24
<i>SMSR</i>	<i>Studi e Materiali di storia delle Religioni</i>
<i>SO</i>	<i>Symbolae Osloenses</i>
<i>SR</i>	<i>Studies in Religion</i>
<i>StudStor</i>	<i>Studi Storici. Rivista trimestrale dell'Ist. Gramsci</i>
<i>TAPhA</i>	<i>Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association</i>
<i>Tod</i>	M.N.Tod (ed.) <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> , 1933–48
<i>UPZ</i>	U.Wilcken (ed.) <i>Urkunden der Ptolomäerzeit (ältere Funde)</i> , 1922–57
<i>WJA</i>	<i>Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>YCS</i>	<i>Yale Classical Studies</i>
<i>ZPE</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i>

INTRODUCTION



This volume aims to be not a conventional work of reference, but a demonstration of some of the most influential new approaches used by analysts of Greek history. In recent decades the expansion of research, and of areas of research, within Greek history has been such that to provide a comprehensive survey of that work is an increasingly ambitious task, even for teams of scholars. The reaction of the properly cautious researcher, when asked to provide a survey for reference purposes, is often to lose enthusiasm, to retreat from detail and the expression of judgement, for fear of seeming to overlook some recent development in scholarly debate. Rather, to engage the enthusiasm of contributors, we have asked each to provide a paper embodying his or her own research. However, the choice of topics for research has been made on certain distinct principles, and the chapters have been grouped accordingly in the volume. Collectively they are intended to display broad areas in which modern scholarship is distinctive; to reveal—by elaborate sample rather than by nervous summary—the potential of that scholarship for important discovery.

In the first section, *The Greek Majority*, contributors explore the lives of, and ancient opinions concerning, non-aristocrats. Only in recent years has it been accepted generally that Greeks outside the ruling circles are worthy of sustained scholarly attention. Yet even the most studied of classical literary texts, with their focus on leaders in politics and the arts, contain frequent references to the citizen poor, to women, slaves and helots. It might have been predicted, therefore, that the substantial volume of work on non-aristocrats which has now begun to appear would not only illuminate the lives of the ruled but would also inform the study of their rulers. It is a principle behind the composition of the present volume that rulers and ruled, high culture and the humdrum, cannot properly be studied in isolation from each other. Hooker examines the social organization which underlay the spectacular aristocratic manifestations of Mycenaean culture. Osborne considers the role of slavery in supporting and shaping the *demokratia* of Athenian citizens. Fisher investigates why the Athenians extended to slaves some protection against what was seen as the subversive vice of the rich, *hybris*. Griffiths studies non-aristocratic characters and attitudes in archaic poetry; Thomas examines the role of poetry in ruling circles of archaic Greece and the poet's degree of freedom from the demands of a popular

audience. Morgan analyses the Greek novel to identify the social position and aspirations of its readership. Van Wees reassesses the differing military contributions made by distinct social groups, and asks whether Greek representations of war have been affected by sectional interests within societies. De Souza studies those seafarers whose very name, 'pirates', suggests their exclusion from the main institutions of power. King assesses claims made about the nature of women by Greek male medical writers from the fifth century to Roman times. Ogden considers how the differing treatment of illegitimate offspring in Greek communities reflected the differing statuses of women. Powell explores images of women in daily life and in mythology to reconstruct fifth-century controversy on the building of the Parthenon.

Greeks (and non-Greeks) at the margins. The study of those at, or beyond, the fringes of the Greek world is now increasingly valued. Hellenists may hope to learn from it about the attitudes of Greeks towards their own culture; comparison and contrast with non-Greeks may also give us ideas of our own about Greek specialness and its limits. In this section Lloyd examines Herodotus' account of Egypt, with a view to testing the veracity of the reports which the historian brought back to readers in Greece. Rowlandson assesses the economic rights possessed by women in Hellenistic Egypt. McQueen analyses the military success gained against Greek *poleis* by one whose Greek, or non-Greek, status (other) Greeks could not agree on: Philip of Macedon. Lomas traces into Roman times the mutual influence of Greek and non-Greek cultures in southern Italy. Erskine explores respectful, indeed religious, attitudes among eastern Greeks towards the power of Rome.

Greeks and their physical environment. Traditional scholarship, when treating the Greeks' use—or creation—of their environment, has focused most on the richest and most aesthetically pleasing of artistic works, and on the use of resources (such as food and drink) among ruling groups. Here a wider view is taken which investigates the interaction of the physical environment with everyday life and the ordinary inhabitants of the cities. Craik examines elements of normal Greek diet, comparing it with modern dietary theory. Rihll and Tucker reconstruct the work of engineering by which drinking water was brought through a mountain to the town of Samos. Lewis explores the central role of the barber's shop in Athenian images of ordinary citizen life. Spivey reconstructs the significance for Greeks of the statues which proliferated in their towns.

Religion and philosophy. The study of Greek religion tended, before the late twentieth century, to concentrate on those aspects most clearly reflected in elegant concrete remains; scholars also privileged the forms of ancient religion most easily assimilated to Western notions of secular power and to modern Christian (and especially Protestant) forms of belief. The Olympian deities appealed to scholars as reflecting still-recognizable aristocratic behaviour. Early Greek notions of afterlife for aristocrats were found more approachable by scholars than the systems of divination and sacrifice by which Greeks of all classes sought to predict and manipulate divine intervention for their lifetimes as well as for the hereafter. In this section Bowie analyses the procedures and meanings of the blood-sacrifices which occurred almost daily in Greek communities. Parker reconstructs patterns of Orphic belief in the afterlife. Kearns makes a general analysis of Greek religion, particularly as it addressed this-worldly, rather than other-worldly, needs. Also in this section Hussey examines

the beginnings of Ionian scientific thought, considering its differences from, as well as its resemblances to, science as understood today. Swain examines Thucydides' attitude towards law and its efficacy, or otherwise, in restraining deviance. Irwin analyses Plato's criticism of the sophists. Saunders examines the problem of which roles, revolutionary or conventional, Plato intended to assign to women in the ideal city of the *Laws*.

The papers in these four sections add up to a series of windows on life in the Greek world as it was lived by the majority, and demonstrate the ways in which the Greek achievement is being relocated in its physical, social and economic setting.

Anton Powell

PART I

THE GREEK MAJORITY



LINEAR B AS A SOURCE FOR SOCIAL HISTORY



J.T.Hooker

MINOANS AND MYCENAEANS

The two major civilizations which arose in the Aegean Bronze Age are the 'Minoan' in Crete and the 'Mycenaean' in mainland Greece. Both terms are modern; it is not known what name the two peoples gave themselves. A distinctive 'Minoan' civilization emerged *c.* 3000 BC. The 'Mycenaean' was of later growth, and came into existence *c.* 1600 BC by the amalgamation of native elements and others introduced from Minoan Crete. In the fourteenth century, the Mycenaeans supplanted the Minoans as the dominant people in the Aegean; but the Minoan civilization persisted within Crete, exerting a modest influence abroad, until the twelfth century.

The Minoans lived at first in small communities, many of them concentrated in the fertile plains of southern and eastern Crete. Early in the second millennium BC, some degree of centralization set in, although this process was never carried to completion. The centralizing tendency manifested itself most impressively in the erection of 'palaces'. These are extensive building-complexes, combining several functions. They have, in the first place, a prominent residential and ceremonial use: they form the seat of the ruling family and its dependants, but also have halls for the reception and entertainment of guests. They contain a number of shrines and other areas dedicated to cult. Furthermore, they exhibit features attesting some degree of political and economic control over their respective regions. For example, they have a storage-capacity for dry and liquid commodities far beyond the needs of the palace-dwellers themselves, showing that goods were gathered in and redistributed according to the will of the palace authorities. Again, there exist industrial areas, intended for the manufacture of metal, stone, and clay objects. Finally, the day-to-day administration of the palace, and also its intercourse with other parts of the state, are documented in archives of clay tablets written in the palace and stored there.

The first Minoan palaces are three in number: they are situated at Knossos and Mallia in northern Crete, and at Phaistos in the south. The palaces, and particularly those of Knossos and Phaistos, were continually rebuilt and remodelled. During the second millennium, they gave way to the 'late' palaces, with the complex at Zakro in the extreme east bringing up the number to four. The late palaces are more grandiose

than their predecessors, but their functions, as listed above, remain the same. In a series of unexplained disasters, *c.* 1450 BC, the Minoan palaces were destroyed by fire, with the exception of Knossos. There the palace survived until its own destruction, the date of which is disputed (*c.* 1375 or *c.* 1200 BC?).

At some undetermined date (perhaps in the fifteenth century), the first palaces arose in Mycenaean Greece. Three of these were built in the Peloponnese: Mycenae and Tiryns in Argolis, and Pylos on the coast of Messenia. Two further examples are at Orkhomenos and Thebes in Boiotia. Despite many differences in arrangement and architecture, the mainland palaces served the same functions as those of Minoan Crete. In time, however, some of them (most conspicuously Mycenae and Tiryns) were equipped with massive circuit-walls and other monumental features, which are quite alien to Minoan practice. The palaces at Thebes and Pylos were destroyed during the thirteenth century; Mycenae and Tiryns were severely crippled and, although life continued there for a time, the level of prosperity and power was greatly reduced.

THE LINEAR B SCRIPT

In the last phase of its existence after the destruction of the other Cretan centres, the palace of Knossos contained several administrative quarters where scribes carried on their work of recording and storing information. For this purpose, they used a form of writing now known as 'Linear B'. This script had been developed, by a process not entirely clear, from earlier Minoan writing-systems. The same script, with slight local variations, served the administrative apparatus of the mainland palaces.

Both in Crete and on the mainland, the clay documents (mostly tablets) inscribed in Linear B were sun-dried; those that survive until the present day owe their preservation to their being baked hard by the fires which consumed the palaces where the tablets were filed. Linear B tablets have been found at several sites (Knossos and Khania in Crete; Mycenae, Pylos, Thebes, and Tiryns on the mainland), but substantial archives remain only at Knossos (KN: more than 3,000 tablets, generally short and badly preserved) and Pylos (PY: more than 1,000 tablets, generally longer and better preserved). These two archives form the material for our enquiry into the social structure of the Bronze Age kingdoms of Greece.

The Linear B system is simple in form, when compared with the contemporary Cuneiform and Egyptian scripts. Leaving aside adjuncts, abbreviations, etc., we can identify four classes of signs: ideograms or logograms, denoting the subject-matter of an inscription in a pictorial manner; signs indicating dry and liquid measures; numerals; syllabograms, i.e. signs representing the syllables of the spoken language. The phonetic equivalents of many syllabograms (numbering about seventy) were established by the decipherment of Michael Ventris in 1952, which revealed the presence of a substantial Greek component. The hope of understanding the entries in the tablets is often (not always) frustrated by the ambiguous and defective nature of the syllabary, which may obscure the exact form of a Greek word. For instance, Linear B *qasireu* is continued by the later Greek *basileus*, 'king' (the syllabary does not differentiate 'l' from 'r', nor does it spell 's' at word-end; initial 'b' develops from 'q' by a regular sound-change). Some words, while undoubtedly of Greek formation, cannot be

elucidated with certainty, since they are not found in later Greek: e.g. two contrasted terms of the Pylos land-tablets, *kekemena* and *kitimena*.

THE NATURE OF THE ARCHIVES

Even apart from the problem just mentioned, the Linear B archives themselves are framed in a way that makes them difficult to interpret as a source of information about the society which produced them. They are, without exception, exceedingly terse records intended to be read only by the writers and their colleagues in the palace administration.

Modern enquirers have found it convenient to divide the tablets into classes (indicated by a capital letter) and sub-classes (indicated by a small letter); each tablet is also given an inventory number. The principal classes of tablets, based on the ideograms, are the following: A: personnel. C: cattle. D: sheep. E: grain. F: allocation of olive-oil. J: allocation and requisition of bronze and gold. L: cloth. M and N: assessment of tribute. T: utensils. U: miscellaneous provisions.

Most, if not all, of the tablets at Knossos apparently belong to one archive; the same is true of the Pylos tablets. A number of indications suggest that records were drawn up annually, and that the extant tablets relate to the last year of accounting, before the destruction of the palaces.

THE STRUCTURE OF SOCIETY

As in their political and economic structures, so in their social life the Mycenaean and Minoans showed closer similarity to contemporary kingdoms, for instance Ugarit in Syria or the Hittites in central Anatolia, than to the classical Greek states. Minoan and Mycenaean institutions are far less well documented than the Hittite or Ugaritic, and the Linear B inscriptions do not allow a comprehensive account of social relationships to be drawn up. The best that can be done is to isolate some salient questions, and to attempt answers based on the relevant Linear B documents. The questions may be framed as follows: To what extent was slavery practised? In what classes of persons did authority chiefly reside? What relationship obtained between the palaces and their subjects? What non-palatial entities co-existed with the palaces?

SLAVERY

When the Linear B records could be read, and to a limited extent understood, the detailed and meticulous nature of their documentation caused some surprise. It seemed, at first sight, that the scribes kept note of, and the palace enjoyed control over, the entire economy of the state. But this view turned out to be erroneous. Some classes of tablets do indeed contain remarkably detailed records; but these concern a very narrow range of topics, which had direct economic importance for the palace administration.

Of all the economic activities recorded by the scribes, the best-documented are the production and working of wool in the domain of Knossos. The palace contained several hundred tablets (belonging to the D and L series), which enable the details of the process to be grasped fairly well. First the palace set targets for wool-production in each locality. Then (presumably on the basis of reports rendered to the centre) records were made of the actual, as distinct from the notional, composition of the flocks at several named places. The number of sheep in a flock is often accompanied on a tablet by two personal names. The first of these is probably that of the shepherd, who was answerable to the palace for the management of his flock. The second sometimes occurs in more than one tablet, and so is likely to represent the owner of a flock, or of several flocks. Some tablets contain no owner's name. In these cases, the shepherd may also be the owner; alternatively (as often supposed), the flocks may belong directly to the king. On either hypothesis, it was clearly important to the central administration to be able to identify the persons engaged in wool-production at a local level. These persons, being named, were dealt with by the palace as individuals; and, although responsible to the centre for the production of specified amounts of wool, they preserved personal independence, since the palace made no provision (so far as we know) for feeding or maintaining them.

So much for the production of wool. The palace of Knossos also concerned itself very closely with the next stage, the making of the wool into textiles. The Knossos Lc and Ld tablets specify amounts of wool, amounts and types of textiles, and sometimes the places where the textiles were to be manufactured.

The work of manufacturing the textiles, and of decorating and finishing them, was done by groups of women, who are enumerated (never named) on the Knossos Ai and Ak tablets. Such women were clearly on a different footing from the shepherds and owners of flocks. Their greater dependence on the palatial administration is indicated in three ways. (1) Some of the Ai tablets refer to amounts of grain, so implying that the palace issued rations to a work-group. (2) A number of Ak tablets contain the syllabic signs TA and DA: these are most likely to stand for 'supervisors'. (3) Many texts enumerate 'boys' and 'girls' as well as women; and in the Ak set still more detailed information is given, with the children called 'larger' or 'smaller' or said to be 'under instruction'. So closely did the palace authorities concern themselves with the everyday life of the work-groups.

These facts and still others are thought to corroborate the view, held particularly but not exclusively by Marxist historians, that the Minoan and Mycenaean palaces owned slaves on a very large scale. Further indicators are these. (1) The husbands of the women are never mentioned. (2) The women are sometimes described as being 'of another person. (3) They are sometimes called *doera*. (The classical form is *doule* 'female slave'; but it is worth remarking that even in classical Greek the word does not have the unvarying meaning of 'chattel-slave').

Before any conclusion is reached, comparison may be made with the Aa and Ab texts from Pylos.

Like the Knossos records already considered, the Pylos texts enumerate groups of women accompanied by boys and girls, but never by husbands; amounts of rations are given, and the presence of 'supervisors' is sometimes noted. Although never naming the women, the Pylos scribes regularly specify them in some way, for instance

according to the type of work they do, the place where they follow their occupation, or their country of origin. In many respects, therefore, the same type of information about the groups of women interested the two sets of scribes except that none of the women in these Pylos texts is ever called *doera*.

Against the indications that the work-groups at Knossos and Pylos comprised slave-women only a single fact may be set, but it is a weighty one: the very large number of women in question. At least 300 women are recorded in the Knossos Ai set, and at least 620 in the Ak set. The Pylos Aa tablets mention more than 640, the Ab tablets more than 340. The totals would be much greater if we had all the relevant tablets, and if all were complete. The difficulty of envisaging that even such establishments as the palaces of Knossos and Pylos would have maintained permanently so many slave-women for specialized tasks has led to the formation of a different theory. According to this, the tablets refer not to slaves but to groups of women employed for seasonal work, as need arose. The women were separated from their husbands so long as the work lasted, but they would naturally keep their children with them.

The ambiguity of these and other Linear B texts makes it difficult to determine the extent of palace-slavery, temple-slavery, and personal slavery in the Mycenaean states. The evidence may be reviewed briefly.

The clearest reference to temple-slavery is made by PY Ae 303, which records the presence at Pylos of at least fourteen 'slaves of the priestess on account of the sacred gold'. These 'slaves' seem to have been members of a guild which was attached to a shrine; that is to say, they were rather 'attendants' than 'slaves' strictly so called.

The description 'slave of the priestess' recurs in the Pylos E tablets, which indicate the size of plots of land by the amount of grain needed to sow them. Eo 224 is the most striking text in this connexion. A '(female) slave of the priestess' is not only given a name, but is put in a list of leaseholders which includes the priestess herself, together with '(male) slaves of the god' (also named) and a *tereta* named *wanatajo*, who in another tablet is himself an owner of land. References to 'slaves of the priestess' and 'slaves of the god' seem to exclude personal slavery, but they leave open the possibility of temple-slavery (of a rather high status).

At first sight, those Pylos Jn tablets which show the allotment of amounts of metal to bronze-smiths appear to allude to the personal slaves of some of the smiths. But that can hardly be the case. Apart from the difficulty of understanding why the central administration should concern itself with the slaves of bronze-smiths in outlying villages, we note that many of the 'slaves' belong to smiths who are not themselves present in the record. A master without a slave is comprehensible enough; but a slave without a master makes no sense unless the word 'slave' is understood in the special sense of a man who can sometimes deputize for the bronze-smith and is so perceived by the central authority.

If the existence of personal slavery cannot be verified in the texts, what may be said of palace-slavery? Apart from the contentious personnel-records of Pylos and Knossos, only one text, PY An 607, has a direct bearing on this question. This inscription, however, is one of the most perplexing in the entire corpus. The only certain item of information conveyed is that thirteen 'slave-women' (*doera*) are being sent to some men called *eqeta* at the place *metapa*. The scribe has added some

‘notes’, referring to the parentage of the women. Some are said to have a ‘slave’ as father, others to have a ‘slave’ as mother. Either, in these two cases, the mother and father respectively are to be taken as free; or (what seems more likely) the word for ‘slave’ has here some technical sense, assigning the person so described to a special place in the hierarchy of palace-dependants.

With the dubious exception of PY An 607, our texts do not specify those of free status. The classical word for ‘free’ is *eleutheros*. This word does occur, spelt *ereutero*, in Linear B texts: not, however, as a designation of ‘free’ persons but as an indication that part of a tribute has been ‘freed’, i.e. remitted (see below on the Pylos Na tablets).

ORGANS OF AUTHORITY

Allusion has been made so far to vague concepts like the ‘central administration’ or the ‘palace authority’. In practice, of course, power was vested in specific persons. The most prominent of these are given titles by our texts, but their respective rights and duties, and hence the relations between them, are never made clear.

Difficulties of interpretation are caused by the word *wanaka*, a spelling of Homeric *wanax*, ‘lord’. In the Linear B documents, as in Homer, the word can be applied both to a human and to a divine ‘lord’. Sometimes, as in the Pylos Fr tablets, the *wanaka* is almost certain to be a god; elsewhere, no doubt, the king of the state is meant; in yet other cases, the *wanaka* may be a local ‘lord’, not the ‘Great King’ at all. But to call the king *wanaka* is not to describe him or to define his status. The title itself need not even imply that the king had a sacral office, still less (as some have maintained) that he was the incarnation of a god.

Another important official is the *rawaketa*, literally ‘leader of the people’. Unlike *wanaka*, this term hardly survives in later Greek, but is occasionally found in the contracted form *lagetas*.

Both *wanaka* and *rawaketa* form adjectives: *wanakatero* and *rawakesijo* respectively. There is also a collective noun *rawake(si)ja*, denoting a body of people responsible to, or under the control of, a *rawaketa*.

The adjectival forms are found in PY Er 312. The *wanakatero temeno* amounts to 30 units of grain, the *rawakesijo temeno* to 10 units. *Temeno(s)* is a word well known in later Greek: it denotes a portion of land assigned to a god or chief for his use and enjoyment. Nothing impedes our taking the term in this sense also in Er 312; but we should beware of reading too much into this text. We should not necessarily infer from its formulation that the two principal men in the kingdom are, first, the *wanaka* and, second, the *rawaketa*; although it is true that no one else is ever said to have a *temeno*.

Er 312 does not stand alone; it forms one of a closely connected group of three tablets, which includes Er 880 and Un 718. The writer of these tablets has recorded a set of facts relating to a place called *sarapeda*. Er 880 gives the details of a (very large) estate held by a prominent man named *ekerhawo*. Then in Er 312 we have the information about the precincts of the *wanaka* and *rawaketa*; it is to be noted that these two precincts together do not equal *ekerhawo*’s estate. The text records yet

another plot (not this time a *temeno*). It is in the possession of three *tereta*. Finally a stretch of uncultivated land is associated with *worokijonejo* (meaning unknown, perhaps with cult-connections). Un 718 concerns a series of forthcoming offerings, both bloody and bloodless, to the god Poseidon. *Ekerhawo* is named first; he is to provide the largest offering. Then comes the contribution of the *damo* (classical *demos*), or ‘local community’. Next we have the *rawaketa*’s offering; finally that of the *kama* (a special class of landholders).

In this perspective, we shall not read Er 312 as a statement that the *wanaka* and *rawaketa* hold the chief political power in the state; it simply adds facts to those assembled in Er 880 and Un 718 concerning *sarapeda*. And why was this place of such interest to the scribe who wrote the three tablets in question? Plainly because of the offerings to Poseidon that were made there. All the human participants, even the most august of them, are mentioned because of their holdings in what has been called, with good reason, the ‘sacred estate’ of Poseidon. We note the important part played by the *rawaketa* in the cult of the god. It is, indeed, as a cult-figure, either giving or receiving offerings, that he is most clearly identified in our texts: these never convey any hint of the character of ‘military leader’, with which he is sometimes credited.

Three named landholders in the Pylos E series are described as *wanakatero*: one is a *kerameu* (potter), who owns a small plot; two others, an *etedomo* (armourer?) and a *kanapeu* (fuller), have leases. In a similar way, lessees and owners named in Ea are sometimes called *rawakesijo*, although their occupations are not given. In addition, the *maratewe* (meaning unknown), excused payment of tribute according to PY Na 245, are specified as *rawakesijo*; it is possible that they were excused payment precisely because of their dependence on the *rawaketa*. The significance of the terms *wanakatero* and *rawakesijo* comes into question. Did the *wanakatero* craftsmen simply work on behalf of the *wanaka*, or did they (as we might put it) form part of his ‘household’? In other words, does the appellation *wanakatero* imply that the persons so called enjoyed a higher status than the rest? It may be so, if the analogy of *rawakesijo* is admissible. Since, in the Pylos Ea tablets, that word is applied to landholders whose status is not otherwise specified, it might have been a mark of distinction to belong to the ‘house’ of the *rawaketa*; and, on the evidence of Na 245, tangible advantages might have resulted. The defective inscription from Knossos, As 1516, is not inconsistent with this picture. Names of men are arranged in three lists. Those in the first list are assigned to *konosija rawakeja* (i.e. the ‘office’ or ‘household’ of the Knossian *rawaketa*), an expression which indicates that there was only one *rawaketa* at Knossos, who did not need to be named.

It is sometimes claimed that a ‘chain of command’ can be reconstructed, with the *wanaka* exercising his authority, through the medium of the *rawaketa*, upon prominent men such as *akosota*, *apimede*, and the *ekerhawo* already mentioned. But while the *rawaketa* and *wanaka*, or *ekerhawo* and the *rawaketa*, may be mentioned in the same text, the relationship between them (if there was one) is never specified. Perhaps the spheres of the *rawaketa*, the *wanaka*, and the other high dignitaries did not overlap to any significant extent.

Among the many other officials recorded in our texts, the *eqeta* deserves special mention. Just as *rawaketa* forms an adjective *rawakesijo*, so the adjectival form

eqesijo corresponds to *eqeta*: it must mean ‘concerned with, belonging to, an *eqeta*’. But what were the functions and social status of an *eqeta*?

Our only encounter with an *eqeta* so far does little to answer this question; for we gathered from PY An 607 merely that there were several *eqeta* and that female ‘slaves’ were sent to them. Yet, according to a commonly held view, an *eqeta* was an official of the royal court with military duties. His status as a ‘royal official’ is arrived at on linguistic grounds; ‘military duties’ are inferred from the contents of certain Pylos texts.

Shortly after the decipherment of the script, the word *eqeta* was interpreted as the forerunner of the later Greek *hepetas* (with regular change of ‘q’ to ‘p’). The title of ‘follower’ was seen as designating a nobleman intimately associated with the king; and comparison was drawn with the institutions of the Germanic and Hittite peoples, which seemed somewhat similar. But, although *hepetas* would unquestionably have been written *eqeta* at the time of the Linear B texts, the conventions of the script allow other possibilities for the sense of *eqeta*; it could, equally well, mean ‘spokesman’, without any ‘royal’ associations at all.

The Pylos texts thought to point to the military office of *eqeta* are those in the An set which contain the word *oka*, together with a list of men. A named *eqeta* is appended to some of the lists. These *oka*-tablets, however, contain no explicitly military terms; and the very word *oka*, usually interpreted as ‘military detachment’, has no Greek equivalent with this meaning. The possibility thus arises that the *oka*-tablets (like so many others) are simply the records of men organized in groups for the performance of a specific task, an *eqeta* being present in some official capacity but not having the exalted rank of king’s ‘follower’.

The Knossos tablets throw a somewhat different light on *eqeta*. B 1055 gives a list of (thirteen?) Knossian *eqeta*, with the men in their charge. In As 4493, *eqeta* is accompanied by a word restorable as *ereutere*, ‘inspector’. This helps us to elucidate the adjectival form in the Ld tablets, which specify cloths either as *eqesija* or as *kesenuwija*. The latter term must mean ‘foreign’ (later Greek *xenia*), while *eqesija* could apply to textiles for the home market which had been inspected by, or produced under the control of, an *eqeta*.

We need not necessarily see a conflict between the Knossian evidence and that at Pylos, so long as we do not insist on the ‘royal’ or ‘military’ function of the *eqeta*. At both sites, the *eqeta* had a humbler, supervisory role; and in that limited sense they can perhaps be seen as representatives of the central authority.

THE PALACES AND THEIR SUBJECTS

Like the governments of other states lacking a monetary system, those at Knossos and Pylos exacted tribute in kind from their subjects. The Pylian texts, in particular, convey the strong impression that several patterns of taxation were current at the same time.

One pattern pervades the Pylos Ma texts. Each tablet is concerned with the assessment of tribute from one locality, which is named at the beginning of the inscription. There follows a sequence of six (unidentifiable) commodities. The

sequence is always the same; and, although the actual amounts of the commodities vary, they are always expressed in the ratio 7:7:2:3:1 1/2:150. Two comments are often added to this assessment. The first mentions *apudosis*, the actual ‘delivery’ of the amounts assessed. The second states that a certain class of artificers, usually bronze-smiths, *oudidosi* ‘make no contribution’. From this we may infer that smiths could be excused payment because they fulfilled their obligation in some other way. One’s first thought might be that, instead of providing their share of the commodities in question, they did a stipulated amount of work at their own craft; but the true explanation is perhaps more complicated, as will be seen presently in connection with the Pylos N tablets. Meanwhile, it may be noted that the Ma set at Pylos has a close counterpart in the Knossos Mc texts, which also record the assessment of commodities at various places; but these sometimes introduce a personal name, perhaps that of the tribute-collector or of the principal tributary.

Different from the Ma texts are those which specify amounts of a commodity demanded from certain towns, with local officials responsible for meeting the requirement. That is the procedure implied by PY Jn 829, which states that six classes of persons ‘will contribute’ (i.e. ‘are required to contribute’) bronze to the palace for the purpose of making weapons. The ensuing list of sixteen places is arranged in an order followed in other Pylos tablets: the first nine comprise the towns of one administrative district, the remaining seven those of another. Each place-name in Jn 829 is followed first by *korete* with an amount of bronze, and then by *porokorete* with a smaller amount (these form two of the six classes of officials). The impression that each place had one *korete* and one *porokorete* is confirmed by PY Jo 438, which likewise associates the *korete* and *porokorete* at named places with quantities of gold. Other occurrences of these words are more obscure, but none of them contradicts the meaning assured for them by Jn 829, while PY On 300, though much damaged, clearly speaks of *korete* as concerned with the administration of a district. The Knossos tablets, too, sometimes place a *korete* in a named locality.

The *korete* recurs in the type of assessment mentioned in PY Nn 831, but his function is somewhat different. The commodity in question here is represented by the sign *SA* (probably=‘flax’). A *korete* (unnamed) has to make a very large contribution on his own account, but does not arrange for the contributions of the other persons mentioned in the list. These are identified either by name or under occupation-terms, cowherd, shepherd, bronze-smith. But what have such men to do with the growing of flax? A possible association is suggested by the Na tablets, which record the flax-assessment at a number of places. Since the terminology of the Na set overlaps with that of the Pylos landholding texts (series E), the villagers described by their occupation may be at the same time the holders of land upon certain conditions. The Na tablets themselves sometimes connect the ‘remission’ of tribute (*ereutero*) with landholding.

In order to learn more about the rights and duties which may be involved in the possession and working of land, we must look in greater detail at some of the sets in the Pylos E series. These very detailed records give information about plots of land situated at *pakijana*, a place near Pylos which is known from other texts (especially Tn 316) to have been an important cult-centre. The E tablets convey valuable information about the stratification of society, and they may also help us to answer

a question which was raised at the very beginning of Linear B studies: to what extent, if at all, did feudal relationships exist in the Pylian state?

A feudal society in the strictest possible sense we would hardly expect to find in such an advanced state as that of Pylos, in which economic operations of considerable complexity had disrupted whatever feudal patterns once obtained and had induced relationships based rather on contracts than on inherited status. (A possible exception was found on PY An 607.)

The roughly contemporary Hittite Laws make constant reference to persons who are obliged to render certain services to their lord or to the king in return for the plots of land they possess; but, side by side with this loose kind of feudalism, there is provision for the people of a semi-autonomous town to make their own arrangements for the cultivation of plots in their own locality.

The Eb and Ep sets at Pylos might appear to offer a parallel to the latter situation, since they name a number of persons who hold land *paro damo* (i.e. 'from the local community'). A plot of this type is called *kekemena kotona*. In contrast stands the *kotona kitimena* of the En and Eo tablets; and this is held not 'from the local community' but from named individuals. Since the two types of landholding are mutually exclusive and since the *damo* is entirely dissociated from *kotona kitimena*, we may surmise that the pattern seen in the tablets represents the superimposition of a later system of tenure upon an earlier; it is possible, furthermore, that land long settled lay at the disposition of the *damo*, whereas land more recently acquired by individual enterprise was in the hands of 'private' owners. Leaving this area of speculation, we next ask whether the *kitimena* land was held under tenures of a recognizably 'feudal' kind.

The En tablets speak of thirteen plots: upon each a named *tereta* is found. Then come several named individuals, the *onatere*, each of whom 'holds' or 'possesses' (*eke*) his plot. The connection between *onatere* and *tereta* must be examined at this point, to see if there are any implications of a feudal nature.

If, as is commonly believed, the word *onatere* contains a Greek stem meaning 'benefit', 'profit', the persons so designated might, in theory, either confer or enjoy a benefit by their possession of land. If the second meaning is applicable, two possible elements of a feudal relationship may be involved, namely the holding by one person of another's land and his enjoyment of its produce; but we so far lack the remaining element, the obligation to perform services for the *tereta* in return for the landholding. It is difficult to demonstrate the presence of this third element.

The greatest hindrance to a full understanding lies in our ignorance of the meaning of *tereta*, and consequently of the status in Mycenaean society of men so called. The fact that later Greek *telestas* would be spelt *tereta* in the Linear B script lacks the significance with which it is often invested, since *tereta* could represent, just as well, a quite different word which did not outlive the Mycenaean period. *Telestas* in its meaning 'man of the service' has naturally been seen as affording support to the notion that *tereta* was a feudal term; but even that support crumbles away with the realization that Greek *telestas* can have a completely different meaning, that of 'magistrate'.

Nor is much help forthcoming from the contexts in which *tereta* is found at Pylos. That the *tereta* could be landowners is clear enough, but 'landowner' does not exhaust the meaning of the word, for we gather from three documents that the *tereta*

formed a distinct class of landowners. (1) Ed 411 gives the grand total of the holdings of all the *tereta*, and separates these from the plots of the *kama*-holders. (2) Eq 146 puts four *tereta* with their holdings in a separate list from other landholders. (3) As previously noted, Er 312 records the ownership by three unnamed *tereta* of a plot of land. Large though the estate of the *tereta* was, according to Ed 411, it was not so large as the estate of the *kama*-holders; and it cannot even be maintained that the *tereta* necessarily stood higher in a 'feudal' scale than did the *onatore*. Two passages in particular make it clear that the *tereta* could be lessees, not lessors, of land and that they might even be placed under obligations with respect to their landholdings:

(1) Eo 211 specifies the *kotona kitimena* of a *tereta* named *wanatajo*, from whom four persons hold their parcels of land. But in Eo 224 (a text already examined in a somewhat different connection) *wanatajo* is himself reported to hold his land from the *tereta* called *amaruta*, although indeed his own status as a *tereta* is mentioned. The inclusion of *wanatajo* in a list together with a priestess and her slave seems to indicate that, while the *tereta* occupied some distinctive place in the complex structure of Mycenaean society, they were far from being feudal lords.

(2) The fragmentary text Eb 149 states that a *tereta* named *suko...operoqe terejae ouqe tereja duwoupide*. The word *opero* is usually understood as a present participle *ophelon* 'being under an obligation', while *terejae* is a present infinitive depending on it, and *teraja* is the third singular present of the same verb. Thus we can say, in broad terms, that this *tereta* 'ought' to carry out some obligation, but fails to do so. We could hardly tell what the verb *terejae* means, if we found it in isolation, except that we might suspect some connection with the noun *tereta*; but the entry on another tablet, Ep 613, which substantially repeats the information given in Eb 149, clarifies the meaning of the verb in an interesting way.

According to line 4 of Ep 613, the *tereta* named *suko...operoqe duwoupi terejae ouqe woze*. A comparison with the parallel text Eb 149 suggests that the meaning of *teraja* cannot be far different from that of *woze*. The sense of the latter verb cannot be stated with certainty. If it is rightly seen as the spelling of an (unattested) verb *urozei*, it could refer to the actual 'working' of the plot in question or, perhaps, to the 'offering' of sacrifices. But, whatever this verb means, the *tereta* is noted as not fulfilling his obligation. In fact, he is in the same position as *kapatija*, the key-bearer (evidently a cult-title), who 'holds two plots and, although obliged to work with both, does not work' (Eb 338/Ep 704.7). It is impossible to define the nature of the obligation to which this woman was subject; but we observe that her obligations and her failure to carry them out are expressed in terms very similar to those applied to *suko* the *tereta*. Consequently it seems that there was nothing in the status of the persons called *tereta* to inhibit their being placed under the same obligation to which some other classes of persons were subject. The very existence of such an obligation with respect to land is difficult to reconcile with the supposition that the *tereta* comprised a class of feudal landowners.

It accordingly seems very unlikely that the Pylos tablets allude to a feudal relationship between the *tereta* and the various tenants who hold land on their estates. But the *tereta* are sometimes thought to participate in feudal relationships of a different kind. We are reminded that, whereas the Eb and Ep sets record a number of plots held by individuals from the *damo*, in Eo and En the plots are held from the

tereta. But (the argument continues) these *tereta* must themselves have held the plots from someone else; that ‘someone else’ can only have been the *wanaka* or monarch of the Pylian state; and the conferment of titles in land must have involved an undertaking by the title-holders to some kind of feudal service.

The argument is seriously flawed, not least because it assumes the very fact which it sets out to prove, namely that the Pylian king was a great landowner (or, rather, *the* great landowner) and that he was in a position to grant plots of land to his subjects. Such was undoubtedly the situation in certain kingdoms of medieval Europe; but no evidence exists to show that it obtained in Mycenaean Greece. As we saw earlier, our documents disclose nothing of the status of the ‘Great King’ of the Pylian state. In particular, they give us no right to believe that a *wanaka* at Pylos owned lands and made grants of them to noblemen. For all we know, the *tereta* held their estates by hereditary right, while the *wanaka* might have been a newcomer or a kind of figure-head who, far from granting land to others, was dependent on them for his own tenure. Thus, although the existence of feudalism in Mycenaean Greece must remain possible in theory, the texts actually in our possession neither confirm nor exclude that possibility.

NON-PALATIAL ENTITIES

There are two fields in which, according to a reasonable interpretation of the Pylos texts, the influence of the palace authorities was greatly diminished, or even rendered inoperative. A closer examination of the terms *damo* and *qasireu* is called for.

Of all the entities mentioned in our documents, the one most readily identifiable as ‘non-palatial’ is the *damo*, hitherto given the tentative translation ‘local community’. This must now be given a more precise definition, on the basis of the Linear B usage. It would be a mistake to let the later Greek sense(s) of *demos* colour our judgement here. The Linear B scribes appear to mean by *damo* a local organ of administration, considered in its corporate capacity. That *could* be the meaning in all the surviving documents; it *must* be the meaning in PY Ep 704.5.

We earlier saw *damo* used in the nominative singular as the contributor of offerings to Poseidon (PY Un 718.7); also, in its far more frequent occurrence, as a dative singular following *paro*, indicating that a person ‘holds’ a plot of land ‘from’ the *damo* (PY Ea, Eb, and Ep sets). One text, Ea 803, presents a unique expression: *kodo eke damijo*, i.e. the man named *kodo* is in possession of a plot ‘belonging to the *damo*’ or, possibly, ‘carved out of the *damo*-land’. How this formulation differs in meaning from *kodo eke onato paro damo* (Ea 824) is not apparent.

It has already been noted that the writers of the E series at Pylos drew a firm distinction between plots of land held from a (named) individual and those held from the *damo*. There was no obvious reason for them to do this, unless the two kinds of tenure differed in some qualitative way, with the actions of the *damo* lying outside surveillance by the palace and, perhaps, beyond its effective control.

With these possibilities in mind, we may look again at the informative document PY Ep 704, from which we earlier elicited the statement about *kapatija*, the keybearer. The first four lines of this inscription are framed in the customary form of the Ep

texts. Persons are stated to possess plots of varying sizes. In line 3, a priestess named *erita* holds a 'lease' (*onato*) 'from the local community (*damo*)'. But then, in lines 5 and 6, after entering the holdings of other persons, the scribe returns to *erita* the priestess and makes a comment with regard to a second (and much larger) holding of hers. The comment falls into two parts: (1) *erita ijereja eke euketoqe etonijo ekee teo*; i.e. '*erita* the priestess holds, and declares the god to hold, an *etonijo*'. (2) *damodemi pasi kotonao kekemenao onato ekee*; i.e. 'but the *damo* asserts that she holds the lease of a communal plot'.

The meaning given here to *kotonao kekemenao* may be arbitrary and unsatisfactory; but the point at issue is clear enough. This is that, while both *etonijo* and *onato* are terms for the beneficial use of land belonging to another, *etonijo* represents a tenure superior to a mere *onato*, and one which may confer a higher social status on its holder. For this reason, it was in *erita*'s interest to claim that she held the higher tenure; and in the interest of the *damo* to contest her claim. Why it should do so we could hardly tell, unless the holder of an *etonijo* enjoyed more valuable usufructs than flowed from an *onato*, and so made greater inroads upon the resources of the *damo*.

The latter emerges with great distinctness in this text as a corporate 'person', having rights against private individuals and willing to assert them in a juridical capacity. It would be going too far to say that the *damo* asserts its rights in direct opposition to the interests of the palace: to make such a statement we should need to know precisely in what relationship the palatial authorities stood to the persons in question. But, if it does no more, Ep 704 amply certifies the existence of the *damo* as a non-palatial institution, and even its pertinacity in pursuing its claims.

It is not possible to point to another such institution having similar rights or such a well-defined role in society. Nevertheless, in looking at the various classes of tablets kept in the palace at Pylos, and acknowledging that many of them attest the direct dependence on the palace of individuals and localities (especially in the organization of work-groups and the imposition and remission of tribute), we find certain terms used in a way incompatible with the strict regulation of all facets of life by the palace. One such term is *qasireu*, found particularly in the Jn texts of Pylos, which have been discussed with reference to the presence of 'slaves'.

We have seen that, apart from Jn 829, which deals with bronze to be contributed from the sixteen towns, the tablets of this set record the distribution of bronze to smiths for working. Even leaving aside the question of slavery, we notice that these texts exhibit a number of peculiarities which are not easy to account for. In the first place, the total amounts of bronze distributed appear to be very small, in comparison with the size and wealth of the Pylian state as manifested in its material remains. On the other hand, the number of smiths is disproportionately large: 26 in one locality, 25 in another, 19 in a third, 17 in a fourth, and so on.

Associated with these striking facts is a matter of terminology. Most of the texts, after recording the names of smiths at a place who 'have *tarasija*' (a word which means 'allotment', or something similar), give the names of *atarasijo* smiths, i.e. those who are without an allotment. In some texts, even the *potinijawejo* smiths (those working on behalf of the *potinija*, a divine or human 'lady') are *atarasijo*. Some texts actually show a preponderance of smiths lacking an allotment over those who have one: such are Jn 692 and 832.

Finally, the status of the *qasireu* raises a problem as acute as any. In a few Jn texts (three out of more than twenty), a *qasireu* is named after the list of smiths who have *tarasija*. The rarity with which the *qasireu* is mentioned effectively precludes his being a kind of ‘supervisor’ of the smiths, appointed by the palace or by some other authority. A ‘supervisor’ would be attached to each of the work-groups, not merely to a small minority of them.

All of these difficulties of interpretation arise from the common, but perhaps mistaken, assumption that the Jn texts comprise records of the disbursement of bronze to local smiths by the palace authorities. But the difficulties become less serious, or even vanish altogether, if the palace is removed from consideration. We may have to reckon not with a network of workshops dependent on the palace and tightly controlled by it but with a much looser arrangement. It would not then be a question of the ‘allotment’ of amounts of bronze from the centre so much as their acquisition in the private domain. Several problems, otherwise intractable, could be solved on this supposition. The small amounts involved would be explicable as adequate for local commerce, although not for a major industry of the state. And there were so many smiths (far more than were required to work the bronze mentioned), because bronze-working formed only part of their activity. In their local villages or towns, they had other functions connected with the economy of the countryside, such as cattle-raising, the growing of wheat and barley, and the cultivation of olives, vines, and figs (all attested in the Linear B tablets). In such a system, the *qasireu* would have his place, not as an artificer actively participating in the work of the smiths but rather as an entrepreneur who was responsible for acquiring their raw material and disposing of the finished product. The groups lacking a *qasireu*, we may presume, had no need of such a ‘middle man’. And those smiths designated *atarasijo* either were awaiting supplies or, for the time being, were not engaged in metal-working but in another of their trades.

CONCLUSIONS

It has become obvious that the Pylos tablets convey more information about social relationships than the Knossian records. There is, however, little reason to suppose that the structure of society differed markedly in the two states. The archives of both make two sets of distinctions, which permit some limited inferences to be drawn. One set relates to the persons mentioned; the other is concerned with palatial and non-palatial entities and their involvement in sacral activity.

As we have seen, the scribes had several methods of referring to people. The crucial differentiation is that between named and unnamed persons. The latter, generally speaking, are of significance to the scribes only in so far as they constitute a work-force of a certain size: this information is necessary because of its bearing on the likelihood of completing a projected task, but also in order to assess the amount of provisions required for the group. There is clearly a difference between these groups of unnamed workers, such as are recorded in the A tablets at both Knossos and Pylos, and the *doero* of the Pylos Jn texts. If, as argued above, the Jn *doero* are not true ‘slaves’ but rather the ‘representatives’ of the named bronze-smiths, they

would have held an appreciably higher status than the female workers; yet they were not named, since the palace had no direct dealings with them, but was interested in them only because of their connection with the smiths.

Turning to the higher levels of society, we can perhaps distinguish three categories. In the first, a personal name is associated with an occupation-term (smith, shepherd, cowherd, etc.) or a title (*tereta*, *egeta*, priestess, etc.). People so named were dealt with by the central authority principally in virtue of the trade they practised or the position they occupied. The names of some of the *egeta* in the Pylos *oka*-tablets are accompanied by patronymics: a rare acknowledgment by the scribes that family membership, no less than functions performed in an official capacity, could be a determinant of social status. Another class comprises persons who are never named but are referred to by their title only: *wanaka*, *rawaketa*, *korete*, etc. The bearers of such titles have interest for the scribes merely as embodying permanent institutions of the state; their individual attributes count for nothing. Conversely, *akosota*, *apimede*, and *ekerhawo*, important for their ownership of land and the discharge of certain duties, are referred to by name without the addition of a title. Hence they appear not to have held any official position, but to have owed their prominence to their wealth and involvement in public affairs. Like the *damo* and the *qasireu*, they formed elements in the Pylian state which were not (so far as we can tell) integrated with the palatial authority.

The coexistence of palatial and non-palatial entities, revealed by the Pylian documents, may be explained in one of two ways. At the time that our tablets were written, the palatial system might already have been in decline. The palace was still able to mobilize groups of workers for specific tasks and to continue the arrangements for exacting tribute: arrangements which, to judge from the Pylos Ma texts, were by now highly organized and standardized. Nevertheless, local interests were beginning to take advantage of the comparative weakness of the central authority, and were encroaching upon areas of activity (such as bronze-working) which had previously been a palatial monopoly.

So much for the first hypothesis. According to the other, the palace had intruded on an established system of petty rulers (*ekerhawo* and the other named persons of substance) and the local communities (*damo*), while allowing them a certain measure of autonomy. It is not easy, from a historical point of view, to assess the respective likelihood of these explanations; nor, of course, are they entirely incompatible. But, for whatever reason, the *damo* had come to form a component of local life, making grants of land, asserting its rights as a legal 'person', and giving offerings to a god: all, presumably, in the name of the inhabitants who comprised it.

Although the central and the local authorities differed in their interests and their functions, they alike participated in the divine cult. The palace was responsible for providing olive-oil for the maintenance of the cults and for the celebration of festivals: so much is confirmed by KN Fp 1 and by the Pylos Fr set. Moreover, PY Tn 316 reads like the record of official sacrifices to various divinities (Poseidon, Zeus, and Hera among others). But, as the Pylos E tablets show, the *damo* also was active in the distribution of plots at the cult-centre of *pakijana*, and many of the recipients of *damo*-land are identified as 'slaves' of the priestess or of the god. The convergence of the palatial and non-palatial spheres is shown most strikingly by the Pylos tablet

Un 718, already studied. Since, as that text indicates, not only the *rawaketa* but also the *damo* and the local notability *ekerhawo* were required to make offerings to Poseidon at *sarapeda*, we may assume that cultic obligations could bear as heavily upon private persons and the *damo* as upon officials in the central authority.

The social structure of the Mycenaean states may now be compared with that of later Greece. With the fading of the Minoan-Mycenaean civilization in the twelfth century BC, the complex political system based on a few palaces came to an end. There were no longer any great centres of trade, redistribution, or administration, and no need for a writing-system. By the end of the so-called 'Dark Age' (c. 850 BC), Greece was profoundly different from what it had been in the Bronze Age. Small, autonomous city-states or loose associations of rural communities had replaced powerful kingdoms. But memories of the kingdoms were kept alive in the epic poetry of Homer, and the Greek language preserved many items of vocabulary, though often with changed meaning. The palatial bureaucracy had entirely disappeared, and with it the hierarchy of officials.

Yet some of the lineaments of society survive. To the Mycenaean local lord or *wanaka* there corresponds the Greek *basileus* or 'king'. As his power wanes, it is assumed by aristocrats, whose Mycenaean forebears have been mentioned. The most notable aristocrats form the *gerousia*, 'council of elders'; and some have seen in Linear B *kerosija* (PY An 261) a spelling of this word (the script does not differentiate between 'k' and 'g'). While that is a scarcely plausible suggestion, we need have little doubt that some such institution existed in Mycenaean times.

It is possible, again, that the Mycenaean *damo* persists in the citizens' assembly, which forms the third major institution of the Greek city-state or *polis*. This last, crucial term has left little or no trace in the Linear B documents. We have only the Knossian proper name *potorijo*, which possibly contains *ptolis* (an alternative form of *polis*). It may therefore be the case that the classical *polis*, with its attendant ideology, first took shape in the eighth century BC. The endemic warfare between *one polis* and another led to a constant supply of prisoners of war, who, if not ransomed, were sold into slavery. The possession of large numbers of personal slaves, and some state-slaves also, was a characteristic trait of the classical Greek *polis*. As we have seen, the existence of so many slaves cannot be verified for the Mycenaean period; but there may have been groups of land-bound serfs, as in the kingdoms described by Homer.

Classical Greece is closer to the Mycenaean world in the area of cult. When we find in PY Un 718 a record of cult-offerings to Poseidon on the part both of state-officials and of local notables, we are reminded of the situation in the classical states. Worship of the city's gods was maintained and promoted by the *polis*, as a matter of course. But, side by side with this 'official' cult, there were rural shrines devoted to specific gods: for instance, the temple of Hera near Argos and that of Apollo at Amyklai a few miles from Sparta. Such shrines predated the rise of the *polis*, and only later were amalgamated with the state-institutions. Standing outside the mainstream of political life, with all its convulsions, the rural shrines preserved one of the elements of Mycenaean worship. This element, together with the local community, formed the chief visible survival of Mycenaean society into the classical period.

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THE ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF SLAVERY AT ATHENS



Robin Osborne

Xenophon in the *Memorabilia* (2.7) tells the following story. Socrates one day met Aristarkhos looking miserable. Aristarkhos explained that he was at a loss what to do, since the end of the Peloponnesian War and the subsequent civil strife at Athens had given him a household full of fourteen female relatives and at the same time cut him off from all his usual sources of income (agriculture, renting out urban property, selling furniture). Socrates pointed out that others managed to feed large households, but Aristarkhos remarked that their households were made up of slaves. Socrates got Aristarkhos to agree that his free-born relatives were better than slaves and that they possessed many craft skills (cooking, making clothes), and suggested that it was preposterous to take the attitude that because the women were free and relatives they should only eat and sleep; rather they should be put to work. Aristarkhos was persuaded, the women were put to work, the household became profitable and all the members of it more happy.

This (rather improbable) story sums up Athenian slavery for many. Slavery was an institution, they think, which the Athenians maintained through prejudice alone: it was purely because they did not like the idea of devoting their lives, and the lives of their women, to production that slavery was so dominant. Not only did slavery go against what should have been their democratic principles of treating all alike, but it was also economically irrational, both in the short term, in that individuals would have been more prosperous without slaves, and in the longer term, in that slavery prevented technological development. What is more, the prejudice which fostered slavery was an aristocratic prejudice and it worked only in the interests of the rich: as long as commercial exploitation of craft activity remained the preserve of slaves, the profits of craft activity remained confined to those with enough capital to purchase slaves, and those short of resources were compelled to remain in the ideologically approved agricultural sphere, despite the hazards involved there and the very limited scope for betterment which fixed resources of land offered. Both economically and politically the ordinary Athenian citizen would have been better off if there had been no slaves¹. This chapter looks at the ways in which slaves were used at Athens, and attempts to assess the economic and political impact of slavery.

There is no doubt that the number of slaves at Athens was large, although it is impossible to determine exact numbers. A variety of ancient figures survive: Hypereides

suggested that his proposal after the battle of Khaironeia (338/7) to enfranchise slaves and others who had lost civic rights would enfranchise ‘more than 15 myriads’ of slaves from the silver mines and the rest of the land;² Athenaios quotes Ktesikles as saying that Demetrios’ census in c. 317 recorded 21,000 citizens, 10,000 metics and 400,000 slaves. Thucydides records that during the Dekeleian war the Athenians ‘were deprived of the whole territory and more than two myriads of slaves deserted and the greater part of these were *kheirotekhnai* (skilled manual labourers), and all the sheep and yoke beasts were lost’. None of these figures is unproblematic in itself, and together they make an even more problematic set. Both Hypereides and Thucydides are simply guessing, Hypereides presumably guessing the total number of slaves, Thucydides a significant proportion (but what proportion?). Ktesikles’ figures for metics and citizens are credible, but it is very unlikely that the census counted slaves and the slave figure must be a guess: given the other high figures also quoted in this passage for slaves in other Greek cities (including Aigina where, since we are dealing with a small island, the absurdity of the resulting population density is clear), this guess seems to be based on a particular conception of classical Greek society as dominated by slaves.³

Arguably, the absolute number of slaves is actually less significant for any assessment of the place of slavery than the question of just how slaves were distributed across society. And here we do have some evidence to play with. In the first place, there is evidence from the orators about the numbers of slaves in craft workshops: Lysias records 120 slaves in his family’s possession in 403, of whom it seems certain that the majority were employed in manufacturing shields; Demosthenes records that his father had two workshops, one with 32 or 33 knifemakers and the other with 20 couchmakers; Aeschines alleges that Timarkhos had 10 or 11 slaves working, making leather goods; Demosthenes records that Pantainetos in the mines had a workshop with 30 slaves; Demosthenes records the income from Pasion’s shield factory as 1 talent a year, which may imply that it employed about 60 slaves.⁴

Second, there are literary sources which make assumptions about the limits to ownership of domestic slaves. Orators occasionally expect, or pretend to expect, the *dikasts* to own slaves: thus Lysias in the defence of Kallias on an impiety charge argues that:

The contest here seems to me not to concern just these men, but involves all the city. For *therapontes* (servants) do not belong to these men alone, but to all the others who, once they have cast an eye upon the fortune of these, will no longer have in mind what good they can do to their masters in order to become free, but what falsity they can plant on them in an information.⁵

Similarly, Demosthenes in the speech for Apollodoros’ prosecution of Stephanos writes:

I have a lot to say about how I have been a victim of *hubris*, but I see that there is not enough water left in the clock. So I will say something which will make you all recognize that the behaviour of which I have been a victim has been excessive—if each of you were to consider to himself what slave he left at home, and were then to picture himself as having suffered from that slave

what I have suffered from this one. It is not as if your slave is Syros or Manes or whatever his name is, while this is Phormio, for the deed is the same. Those are slaves and this is a slave; I am a master and you are masters.⁶

If the implication in these passages is that any Athenian citizen over thirty with enough free time to appear in the courts could reasonably be expected to own a slave,⁷ then the implication of Plato's throw-away remark in *Republic* 578d–579a ('Suppose a very rich man with fifty or more slaves...') suggests an upper limit on normal domestic holdings.

These literary testimonies can be finessed with evidence from inscriptions. The two most important sources here are the Attic stelai and a late fifth-century list of sailors.⁸ When the property of those found guilty of mutilating the Hermai and profaning the Mysteries was sold off in 414/13 their slaves were also sold. The lists of property sold do not survive complete, and the way in which the sales proceeded means that any individual's slaves were not necessarily all sold on a single occasion,⁹ but we can trace 16 slaves from the property of Kephisodoros (a metic, who could not own land in Attica), 9 slaves from that of Adeimantos (in 4 different lots), 7 (or possibly 8) from that of Axiokhos (sold in 2 different lots),¹⁰ 4 and 6 slaves from properties whose owners' names do not survive, and lots of just 1 slave from the property of Polystratos and of an unknown owner. Kephisodoros' slaves may have worked in a single unit: they comprise three Thracian women, two Thracian men, two Syrian men, a Karian man, a Karian youth and a Karian child, two Illyrian men, a Skythian man, a Kolkhian man, a man perhaps from Malta and a Lydian woman with equally various prices ranging (for the adults) from somewhere between 85 and 88 dr. for the Lydian woman to 301 dr. for one of the Syrian men. The others' slaves, sold in separate lots, most probably were attached to distinct units of property. Whether they were bought by one or more than one purchaser we cannot know.¹¹

While those whose property was confiscated in 414/13 were almost certainly wealthy men, the list of sailors from the last years of the Peloponnesian War gives us a glimpse of rather more humble classes. The exact context for this unique inscription is not known, but it is almost certainly related to the Athenian decision to honour those who fought in the sea battle at Aigospotamoi. The list (which again, is only partly preserved) distinguishes between the ships' officers, marines (*epibatai*), citizen rowers, archers and slave rowers, and gives citizen names by first name and demotic, slave names by first name and owner's name. Ninety-five more or less certainly different owners' names appear with the slaves, and of these ninety-five, four certainly owned three slaves and three more possibly did; ten certainly (and two more possibly) owned two slaves. In nine of the 95 cases, the owner himself figures among the citizens on the lists, in one case as an officer (*pentekontarkhos*), in six cases as *epibatai* (marines), in one case as an ordinary citizen rower and in one case as trierarch. The contrast between the hoplite *epibatai* and the ordinary citizen rowers is particularly marked in that one group of ten *epibatai* includes six slave owners (lines 83–93) while in another group of 23 citizen sailors none are attested as slave owners.¹²

The combined testimony of the literary texts and the inscriptions suggests that Athenians of the hoplite class and above would regularly be slave owners, indeed owners of enough slaves to have disposable slaves to put into triremes. Athenians of

less than the hoplite census would seem regularly not to have had disposable slaves, but may only rarely have had no slave at all. Slaves might be employed in workshops, either directly under the eye of the owner or working independently, but were also part of any household group and could be expected to be found on any of the properties of a rich man. Only, it would appear, in the context of craft production were large numbers of slaves found in a single group.¹³

We know of no large-scale craft unit which employed Athenian citizens. Citizens certainly were skilled in certain craft activities: the records of the building work on the Erekhtheion in the last decade of the fifth century show citizens, metics and slaves working side by side.

In the eighth prytany of the tribe Pandionis. Received from the Treasurers of the Goddess, Aresekhmos of Agryle and his colleagues, 1239 dr. 1 ob. Expenditure: purchases: 2 boards on which we inscribe the accounts, at 1 dr. each: 2 dr. Total purchases: 2 dr. Stonework: for channelling the columns at the east end opposite the altar. The third column from the altar of Dione: Ameiniades who lives in Koile, 18 dr.; Lysanias, 18 dr.; Somenes slave of Ameiniades, 18 dr.; Timokrates, 18 dr. The next column: Simias who lives in Alopeke, 13 dr.; Kerdon, 12 dr. 5 obols; Sindron slave of Simias, 12 dr. 5 obols; Sokles slave of Axiopeithes, 12 dr. 5 obols; Sannion slave of Simias, 12 dr. 5 obols; Epiekes slave of Simias, 12 dr. 5 obols; Sosandros slave of Simias, 12 dr. 5 obols. The next column: Onesimos slave of Nikostratos, 16 dr. 4 obols; Eudoxos who lives in Alopeke, 16 dr. 4 obols; Kleon, 16 dr. 4 obols; Simon who lives in Agryle, 16 dr. 4 obols; Antidotos slave of Glaukos, 16 dr. 4 obols; Eudikos, 16 dr. 4 obols. The next column: Theugenes of Peiraieus, 15 dr.; Kephisogenes of Peiraieus, 15 dr.; Teukros who lives in Kydathenaion, 15 dr.; Kephisodoros who lives in Skambonidai, 15 dr.; Theugeiton of Peiraieus, 15 dr.¹⁴

In so far as there is a distinction between free and slave labour it is that the more highly skilled jobs are performed by free labour, the more basic jobs by slaves: only three citizens and five metics are sculptors, only one citizen and five metics woodcarvers whereas sixteen slaves are found beside twelve metics and nine citizens as masons.

Although the Erekhtheion is clearly a major project, the epigraphic records show that it did not employ labour in large groups but established individual contracts. In this respect, working on the Erekhtheion was more akin to being independently employed in one's own workshop than to being part of a large enterprise. It is clear that there were citizens who worked as craftsmen on their own, although they make little impact on either literary or epigraphic records: thus the shoes for the public slaves at Eleusis are made by a citizen cobbler.¹⁵

Most craft activities could equally reasonably be pursued by individuals or by groups, with only limited advantages in group activity. But the mining of silver only made sense as a group activity, because of the amount of mining that had to be done before either the 'washing' process or the refinement and smelting of the silver became worthwhile. And it is in the mining of silver that there is almost no trace of citizen labour,¹⁶ and plentiful indication that the labour force was servile. The issue

in Xenophon's treatment of the mines and how they could be made more profitable for Athens is not the status of the work-force in them but who should own the slaves that work there. Xenophon records that:

Nikias son of Nikeratos owned 1,000 slaves in the silver mines, which he let out to Sosias the Thracian on condition that he would pay him an obol a day net per man and that he would always keep the number constant. Hipponikos had 600 slaves hired out in the same way, who brought in a mna (60 dr.) a day net. Philemonides had 300 bringing in 30 dr. And others as they were able, I think. But why talk about the past? There are still many men in the silver mines nowadays who are let out on the same conditions. If my suggestions were to be carried out, the only innovation would be that, just as private individuals who have acquired slaves have provided themselves with a permanent source of revenue, so the city would acquire public slaves up to a ratio of three slaves for each citizen...¹⁷

Xenophon goes on to imagine the total number of publicly owned slaves in the mines rising to 10,000. We have no direct evidence for the numbers of slaves actually employed in the mines, but modern scholars have made calculations which suggest that the actual numbers at any one time were probably something above 10,000 during the fourth-century height of the workings, and perhaps as many as 22,000 or even 30,000.¹⁸ Conditions in the mines were reputed to be poor,¹⁹ but we cannot assess the effects of this on shortening the lives of those employed there. It is to be noted, however, that no slave identifiable as a mine worker is to be found among those who figure in the manumission lists from the third quarter of the fourth century.²⁰

Just as mines and craft workshops of any size may have employed almost exclusively slaves, so slaves may also have dominated domestic work. When we are told in court about a free Athenian woman who was employed as a wet-nurse, the speaker feels obliged to explain that this occurred in circumstances of peculiar poverty,²¹ and although we might have expected that the physical participation in the nourishment of a potential citizen would make that a special case, other evidence suggests that even a wet-nurse might be a slave.²² For Theophrastos it is the mark of the stingy man that he does not buy a slave girl for his wife, and in comedy and the orators whenever we are given a glimpse inside a household there are slaves there. So, the 'two-up, two-down' town household pictured in Lysias 1 includes a slave (girl), as does the propertied household of [Demosthenes] 47, and the country household that forms the focus of Menander's *Georgos* (which uses hired labour for agricultural work). In [Demosthenes] 47 not only is the speaker's household well provided with slaves, but the alarm is raised by the domestic slaves (*therapontes*) from neighbouring houses.²³

The free women of a household might work alongside the female slaves in some domestic tasks, as Iskhomakhos' wife is portrayed as doing in Xenophon's *Oikonomikos* (7.6), and domestic servants might come to enjoy a special place in the affections of their owners,²⁴ and even to exploit that special place (as Moskhion does in [Demosthenes] 48.14). The manumission lists include fifty female wool spinners (*talasiourgoi*), and these seem best interpreted as general domestic servants rather

than as workshop workers. There is no sign that free domestic labour was an alternative to slave domestic labour. There were a number of terms in use to describe personal servants, terms such as *therapon* (manservant), *therapaina* (maidservant), and *oiketes* (household servant), and none of these terms is ever used to refer to a free person: it is clear that the expectation is that such a person will always be a slave. The clearest text of all on this is perhaps Plato, *Laus* 776e–777a:

[Some people tell good stories about faithful slaves but] other people say the opposite—that there is no health in the soul of a slave, and that the sensible man must never trust slaves an inch. The wisest of all our poets even gives the opinion, speaking for Zeus, that ‘Zeus who sounds afar takes away half a man’s wits when they are taken into slavery.’ Everyone takes a different understanding of these things, and some do not trust the pack of servants (*oiketai*) at all, and like those of the nature of beasts, with goads and whips make the souls of servants (*oiketai*) not just thrice but many times as slavish as they were, while others do the opposite of all this.²⁵

The area where there is most debate about the extent to which slaves were employed is agriculture.²⁶ No one doubts that slaves were extensively used in agricultural operations on the estates of some rich men: Xenophon’s *Oikonomikos* makes that clear beyond all reasonable doubt, especially in the section dealing with the qualities required in the (slave) bailiff who controls the workforce.²⁷ What is more, eleven *georgoi* along with two vinedressers appear among the manumitted slaves on the fourth-century manumission lists. But the question that is far less tractable is of the extent to which slave labour was an integral part of the agricultural operations of the peasant farm. Literary evidence is never going to give a clear answer to this, partly because of its inherent bias towards the wealthy and partly because of the difficulty of demonstrating a negative from literary evidence. We can perhaps do better by assessing whether there was a structural necessity for slave labour in peasant agriculture.

I offer the following as a possible working hypothesis. It is dependent on a number of estimates of quantities, all of which might be questioned but all of which seem to me, on the basis of current understanding, to be of the right order of magnitude. Modern assessments of the area of Attica which can be exploited by agriculture have varied considerably. If we allow for tree crops and pastoral exploitation, it may not be unreasonable to reckon half or more of Attica to have been exploited in antiquity,²⁸ but the amount of land which could be cropped with cereals was somewhat less. Just how much less it is difficult to determine, but there can be little doubt that Jardé’s figure of 20 per cent arable, only half of which was cropped each year, is too small, and that a figure of around one third, or even a little more, is more reasonable.²⁹ If we assume that around one third of the 2,400 square kilometres of Attica was cultivated with cereals annually, then, allowing for some biennial fallow (more universal on the estates of the rich, perhaps), we might assume that just over one fifth of Attica (say 50,000 ha.) was sown with cereals each year.³⁰ I have estimated elsewhere, using liturgical and eisphora demands as my baseline, that perhaps between a quarter and a third of the agricultural land of Attica was in the hands of the 2,000 richest families comprising perhaps approaching 3,000 citizens.³¹

This suggests perhaps 15,000 ha. of cereals cultivated by the richest 3,000 citizens each year, 35,000 ha. cultivated by the other 25,000 citizens.

There are two great labour crises during the agricultural year: ploughing and sowing, and harvesting. For both these operations the 'window' is relatively short and the labour demand high. Just how much pressure there is over ploughing and sowing is very dependent on when the autumn rains come, and no good modern comparative figures seem to exist from which any calculation can be made. But recent work by Paul Halstead and Glynis Jones has given some excellent modern comparative data for the reaping of cereals.³² Halstead and Jones suggest that reaping barley requires 1.5–4.5 man-days per stremma, 15–45 man days per hectare. This gives a labour demand of between 225,000 and 675,000 man-days to reap the harvest from the estates of the rich, 525,000 to 1,575,000 man-days to reap that from the estates of the peasant farmers. If we reckon on a harvest period of three weeks,³³ and on a lowish figure of two man-days a hectare,³⁴ getting in the harvest of the rich would need just under 15,000 men's labour, getting in the harvest from peasant estates something around 35,000 men's labour. This suggests that it may have been possible for peasant farmers to reap their own cereal harvest with the aid of labour from the rest of the family (women and juveniles) and from any normally domestic slaves.³⁵ The area where there would be a massive need for additional labour would be on the estates of the rich, where we have other reasons to believe that slave labour was employed. But it is worth noting that what those practising extensive agriculture for the market, who have plenty of land but need to keep costs down and therefore labour down, need, even more than those practising intensive agriculture primarily for subsistence, is a source of *additional* labour for use during the peak periods, that is labour, whether free or slave, which is either not employed at all, or not employed in agricultural tasks, during the rest of the year.³⁶ Thus, even on the estates of the rich, any slave labour force employed will need some non-agricultural occupation for much of the year.³⁷

Can we make sense of this pattern of slave employment? Is there any economic reason for the exclusive employment of slaves in mines and in domestic labour, and for their rather more limited employment in agriculture? To take agriculture first, the demand for agricultural labour on any farm is far from even. Even the most careful planning of crops will still leave some times of the year when there is little agricultural work to be done, and other times when the labour demand is very great.³⁸ But additionally, on a family farm the labour available varies considerably at different stages of the family's own history, depending on the amount of female and juvenile labour available, a variation emphasized by the normally late age of male marriage.³⁹ Any increase in the size of the household not only gave additional labour, it also created additional demand, and so might provoke the purchase or leasing of further land. Thus in the case of any individual household, the demand for labour in excess of that which could be provided from its own resources would vary both annually and over a whole life-cycle, and the calculation of whether it would be worth employing slave labour specifically for agricultural tasks might be a delicate one which depended on changes foreseeable in the household itself during the potential working life of the slave. Aristotle claims that a poor man has an ox instead of a slave.⁴⁰ It is very difficult to believe that the poor would regard the ox, useful for

ploughing and carting but useless for other agricultural tasks, as a higher priority than additional human labour, and if we are to make any sense of Aristotle's claim at all, it would be to suggest that there is a stage in the life-cycle of the household when the traction of the ox for ploughing and sowing might seem a higher priority than additional human labour in gathering and processing the harvest.⁴¹

By contrast with agriculture, craft activities have a much less complex cycle. While there doubtless was a delicate relationship between supply and demand (as indeed part of the opening story of Aristarkhos suggests), this will not have been something easy to judge in advance, affected as it would be by political events (such as the loss of the Peloponnesian War). In general, additional hands could be put to productive use throughout the year, and the presence or absence of a labour input by the family would not necessarily play a crucial role. Demosthenes' father had all his money invested in non-agricultural activities, and Timarkhos had slaves working independently as leather-workers: it is clear that for these men ownership of slaves engaged in craft activity was a source of income not closely tied to the household at all. But if this explains why use of slaves is more convenient in craft production than in agriculture, it will not explain why citizens should not themselves labour at these activities in groups.

We get some idea of the economics of the ownership of slaves engaged in craft activity from Demosthenes' account of his own father's workshops. Demosthenes reports that his father's knife-makers had a capital value of around two talents and yielded half a talent a year net, while his couch factory had a value of something over 4,000 dr. and yielded 1,200 dr. a year net. In the former, slaves worth on average just under 450dr. would yield just over 90 dr. net profit per head; in the latter, slaves worth on average something over 200 dr. would yield 60 dr. per slave per head. These figures suggest that slaves might realize their own capital value in around four or five years. The figures which we have for slaves hired out to work in the mines suggest a slightly more profitable situation: Nikias' slaves in the fifth century, hired out at an obol a day with the lessee replacing any losses, would yield 60 dr. a year to him, and clearly enough to their lessee for him to be able to write off losses. Calculating *just* how much profit in all might come from slave labour in the mines depends on making a series of guesses. If about 1,000 talents a year of silver was extracted from the mines, by, say, 10,000 slaves who cost 1/2dr. a day to keep (300 talents a year) then the total net income per slave would be something over 400 dr. a year—from which capital costs (including the purchase of replacement slaves) have to be subtracted. Silver mining may have been extremely profitable for those who hit rich, but also a rather risky business, since the lessee of a dud concession faced high capital costs for little return.

How would this compare with the profitability of such labour for a citizen? If the profits of craft labour were such that one who practised it would earn enough to buy a slave every four years, why did citizens not practise crafts more? Two considerations are important here: the length of the working year, and the question of dependents.

The relationship between man-days and production is clearly much more direct in craft production than in agricultural production. In agriculture, man-days of sowing not done or reaping not done have a drastic effect on production, but man-days of weeding not done have a minor effect. In craft production, any man-day lost has

much the same effect on lost production. The farmer could, arguably, afford, at many times of the year, to spend whole days taking part in festivals or attending political meetings or the courts, in a way that the man working at a craft could not.⁴² If the citizen craftsman took 25 per cent of his time off doing other things (and the number of festivals means that he could easily have taken even more time off than that), then he loses 25 per cent of his income. Gaining payment for attending the assembly, serving as a *dikast*, or serving in some magistracy might help make up for this for such a man, but for the farmer such payments, and any craft work he might find available during the slack seasons, were virtually pure gain. Slaves, notoriously, had no leisure.⁴³

As to dependents, unlike the slave, the citizen craftsman is unlikely to be a single man: the obol or two a day sheer profit per slave that these craft units bring in would actually be insufficient to support a household, even without the distractions of religious and political life.

It seems unlikely, therefore, on the basis of these rough and ready hypothetical calculations, that citizens could actually have supported their households, let alone continued to take any part in public life, had they taken employment doing the tasks that slaves did. The special situation of Aristarkhos' household now becomes apparent: Aristarkhos is able to put his household to work because it includes so many female relatives. His is not the normal family unit at all, but a quite extraordinary unit which is the product of extraordinary political circumstances. The female relatives, unencumbered by menfolk or, apparently, young children, supply him with an abundance of labour, well in excess of the daily labour demand of the household. Surely no normal household could offer such a labour surplus, for while we should not underrate the labour input of women into the normal Athenian household, much of that labour would have been directly spent on the subsistence of that household, and only in abnormal circumstances did the supply of free female labour approximate in any way to the deliberate accumulation of slaves without subsistence duties such as made up the craft workshops.

If the division between use of slave labour in craft production and use of free labour in agriculture was not economically irrational, that is not to deny that it was compassed about with prejudices. Socrates, not entirely without irony, sums these up well in Xenophon's *Oikonomikos*:

The trades known as the trades of artisans (*banausikai*) are decried with good reason and held in low esteem in the cities. They disfigure the body of those who practise and pursue them, by compelling them to remain seated and in the shade, and some even cause you to spend the whole day sitting by the fire. When the bodies get softened in this way the souls lose a great deal of their strength, and especially artisans' trades leave one very little time for friends and for the city, and the result is that men like these seem very inadequate in their relations with friends and when it comes to defending the city. Hence in some cities, especially those which have a military reputation, no citizen may pursue an artisan's trade (*banausikai tekhnai*).⁴⁴

The political aspect of this prejudice similarly exercises Aristotle in his discussion of citizenship in Book 3 of the *Politics*:

One problem concerning the citizen remains: is it really the case that the citizen is he who has the right to take part in the government (*arkhe*) or should we call the *banausoi* citizens? If we are to include these persons also, who have no part in *arkhai*, such goodness cannot belong to every citizen, this man being a citizen. But if such a person is not a citizen, in what class are we to put him? He is not a metic nor a *xenos*. Can we say that there is no absurdity here? He is in the same position as slaves and freedmen. It is certain that we must not call citizens all those without whom there would be no city. Even children are not citizens in the same way as adults. Adults are citizens simply; but children are only hypothetically so. They are citizens, but imperfect ones. In ancient times the labouring population was slave and foreign in some places, which is why most of them are so today; and the best city will not make labourers citizens. If, however, he too is a citizen then we must say that the goodness we spoke of does not belong to every citizen, nor to every free man, but only to those who are released from necessary services. Those who provide necessary services for one man are slaves. Those who do it for the community are labourers (*banausoi*) and workmen (*thetes*).⁴⁵

It is clear that for Aristotle the problem of the *banausos* as citizen is only a marginal, almost academic, problem. That the problem could be so marginal depended, at Athens at least, on the way in which the permanent labour force in craft production is dominated by slaves. Were this not the case Aristotle's question about the citizenship rights of the *banausos* would become a very serious one indeed.

The ideology of Athenian democracy depended upon the equality of the citizen body. Only if all citizens could reasonably be considered to be in certain senses equal could democratic mechanisms of government, and in particular popular courts, assembly and selection of magistrates by lot, be sustained. One sense in which it was important to be able to consider citizens equal, was in the ability to make political decisions: it is in this area that Protagoras' epistemology is so important for democracy, for it stressed that man was the measure and that while there could be better and worse judgements it was not a matter of some men being right and others wrong.⁴⁶ But there is also a practical sense in which citizens must be observed not to be grossly unequal, and that is in their access to the organs of democratic government: one side of this comes in the stress on the rule of law, but another side concerns physical access. This practical side is very much at issue in Pericles' Funeral Speech in Thucydides 2:

The law secures equal justice for all in their private disputes, and according to a man's worth, as each enjoys a reputation for doing certain things well, he gets particular respect in public affairs not on a basis of rotation but according to his merit, and if a man has some good to contribute to the city he is not prevented because poverty makes his distinction less apparent. In matters of communal interest we respect the freedom of citizens, and in areas of mutual suspicion in our day-to-day manner of living, we neither get angry with our neighbour if he enjoys something, nor do we give him those black looks which do no immediate harm but put a burden on relations. We associate in

a relaxed manner as regards private affairs, and in public matters fear, especially, keeps us from disobeying both those who are holding some office at any one time and the laws, and particularly those laws that work for the benefit of those who are wronged and all that are unwritten but are agreed to carry a burden of shame with them.

(2.37.1–3)

It is vital for the plausibility of Pericles' claims in this passage that there should not be observable in Athens any significant number of free-born Athenians who were not 'released from necessary services'.⁴⁷

Athens can be seen to have protected her democracy against the threat posed by those poor citizens, whose rights were, all too clearly, only hypothetical, in other ways too. Most notable here is the claim in Demosthenes 57 that: 'Euboulides' slander of us is not only against the decree, it is contrary to the laws which command that the man who abuses one of the citizens, male or female, for working in the agora should be liable to prosecution for slander (*kakegoria*).'⁴⁸ But in the same category should be seen the inviolability of the citizen's body, in direct contradistinction to the body of a slave. Demosthenes, again, puts this most clearly: 'If you really want to know what difference it makes whether one is slave or free, you would find the greatest difference is this: for slaves it is the body that is liable for punishment for all misdemeanours, but free men, however great their misfortune, can at least keep their bodies safe.'⁴⁹ This is a distinction which is constantly played up in Old Comedy, and although there is no doubt that this is in part because there is something curiously humorous about physical violence, the political importance of thus keeping slaves in their place, and so emphasizing the very different place of the citizen, is not to be ignored.⁴⁹

I began this chapter with a tendentious hypothetical reaction to the story of Socrates and Aristarkhos, in which I suggested that Athenian use of slaves was both economically irrational and contrary to democratic principles. In the course of the chapter I have endeavoured to show that this is the very reverse of the truth. There was a high degree of economic rationality to Athenian behaviour with regard to the employment of slaves: many of the jobs which slaves were employed to do were jobs which were either only worth having performed if they cost no more than minimal maintenance (as with domestic labour for most of the population) or else yielded insufficient clear profit to enable a citizen family to survive, let alone to achieve upward social mobility. Aristotle's discussion of the slave as a 'living tool' (*organon empsukhon*)⁵⁰ is helpful here: slaves were employed precisely in those circumstances where what was required was merely an instrument, and where the only human labour that could be justified economically was the labour of humans who approximated to tools. But there were compelling political reasons for using slaves too: slave labour in occupations where the labourer approximated to a tool was vital to the prospect of maintaining democratic principles. Only if citizens could be exempted from the obvious subservience to others involved in domestic labour and from the degradation of performing physically constricting and scarcely tolerable tasks such as working in the mines was it possible for them to maintain that they all were equal and all equally had an active role to play in sustaining democracy.

It has often been maintained that it was only the presence of slaves that gave citizens the leisure to devote to politics,⁵¹ and it is in this sense that Finley maintained that the growth of freedom and the growth of slavery went hand in hand.⁵² There is a sense in which this seems to be a dubious claim: the agricultural basis of the citizen economy was itself enough to ensure that for much of the year time was not at a premium for the Athenian citizen, and slaves were not required to free the citizen to engage in political activity. But there is another sense in which Finley's claim seems correct: it was, arguably, only the presence of slaves that enabled the fiction of citizen equality to be maintained. Slaves ensured that citizens were not obliged to perform domestic tasks for others or work in craft workshops or the mines where they would both have been deprived of leisure and have been quite apparently subject to, rather than on a par with, other citizens. The prejudice so frequently found against having to spend one's life working indoors, in a situation of dependence on others, was part of a strategy which, by so strongly stressing the degradation of roles other than those of the citizen farmer, served to suggest that all who were not compelled to produce for or work for others were of course equal. Such prejudice was the prejudice of those who liked to regard themselves as an elite, and it was a prejudice shared with and taken over from the aristocracy. But similarly the whole ideology of democracy in Athens was élitist (and framed the aristocracy's terms) as it separated off Athenians as superior to all others, Greeks and barbarians alike.

Was this dependence of Athenian democracy on an underclass of slaves (and similarly on an underclass of women, but that is another story)⁵³ a unique product of the pressures of direct democracy? We might imagine that once one is dealing with a 'representative' democracy the respects in which citizens must be seen to be equal are much reduced—that they need to have equally unhindered access to the ballot box but little else. But to take that view is to assume that shared voting privileges are all that membership of a modern democratic community is about. Clearly, whether they are formally defined or not, civic rights are a bundle in which the ability to cast a vote is only one part. The greater the number of respects in which citizens can expect to be equal, the more difficult it is to achieve a situation where even a fiction of such equality can be maintained. It was not *democracy* as such which slavery enabled in Athens, but a particular conception of the citizen body as made up of an essentially homogeneous body of men, none of whom were subject to constraints imposed by other individuals. This is a conception which modern Western democracy certainly shares with classical Athens.

If we ask why Athens came to depend on slaves, our answer must have both economic and political elements. For dependence on slavery could only occur when there was a society which both consciously identified itself as sharing at least some basic political and social rights and privileges on essentially equal conditions, and came to regard it as necessary or desirable to engage in enterprises which would have been impossible without using others in such a way as to make the pretence that they shared those basic rights and privileges impossible to sustain. Although in Athens the circumstance in which the impossibility of employing citizen labour can be most easily illustrated is the silver mines, it is arguable that it is the scale of the economic unit which is really crucial: large agricultural estates were in the end as

incompatible with wholly citizen labour as were industrial enterprises, as the case of Sparta (for all the additional complicating factors involved) might be held to demonstrate. Both democracy and oligarchy might be dependent on slaves: the maintenance of an aristocracy in the face of pressure to acknowledge the effective dependence of the city on a wider body of citizens, and the undertaking of economic activities on any large scale within a city with a citizen body with established privileges, both demanded an underclass who were excluded from the citizen body. Given the combination of a certain conception of citizenship with economic units larger than the household it is difficult to see how some form or another of slavery was to be avoided.

The graphic exploitation of slaves, in enabling the visible exploitation of citizens to be avoided, upheld an ideology rather than simply a body of practices. If we observe the way in which American democracy was built on the back of negro slavery, the way in which British democratic practice has developed through the exclusion of women, and the way in which both America and western Europe currently exploit certain sections of immigrant labour,⁵⁴ we might note that modern representative democracy's more restricted citizen freedoms are equally built on the effective denial of those freedoms to those whose citizenship links are conveniently tenuous.⁵⁵

NOTES

- 1 Such is, I think, the implication of Jones 1957:25.
- 2 Hypereides frg. 33 Blass, 29 Kenyon, *Souda* s.v. Ἀπεψηφίσατο. The word 'slaves' actually has to be restored in the *Souda*'s text, but that restoration, and the context, seem safely to be inferred from frs 31 and 32 Blass (27 and 28 Kenyon).
- 3 Athenaios, *Deipnosophistai* 272c; Thucydides 7.27.5 with de Ste. Croix 1957:56 for the interpretation of *kbeirotekhnai*. On questions of Athenian demography in the fourth century see Hansen 1985 (especially pp. 28–36 on Ktesikles). Paul Cartledge has pointed out to me that it is just possible that Thucydides had reliable information about the number of slaves fleeing during the Peloponnesian War from the tithing of the money raised from selling them on.
- 4 Lysias 12.19; Demosthenes 27.9; Aeschines 1.97; Demosthenes 37.4; Demosthenes 36.11 with Davies 1971:433–4.
- 5 Lysias 5.5.
- 6 Demosthenes 45.86.
- 7 One can compare the expectation of the disabled man defending his right to a state pension that it was reasonable for him to expect to have a slave: Lysias 24.6.
- 8 The Attic stelai are *IG* i³ 421–30. Excerpts with commentary are to be found in *ML* 79 with translations in Fornara (1977/83) 147D. Full discussion is to be found in Pritchett 1953, 1956; the list of sailors is *IG* i³ 1032.
- 9 See Lewis 1966.
- 10 On Axiokhos see Davies 1971 no. 600 VI (B).
- 11 These groups of slaves can be compared with those attested in the wills of philosophers given by Diogenes Laertius: Aristotle's will (D.L. 5.11–16) mentions at least 12 slaves, for 4 of whom freedom is arranged; Theophrastos' will (5. 51–7) mentions 8 slaves

- and arranges to free 5; Straton's will (5. 61–4) mentions 7, arranging freedom for 4; Lykon's will (5. 69–74) mentions 13, arranging freedom for 11.
- 12 *IG* ii² 1951. See the discussion in Garland 1988b:166.
 - 13 Compare Finley 1980:82.
 - 14 *IG* i³ 476.183ff.(408/7). On this see Randall 1953.
 - 15 *IG* ii² 1672.190.
 - 16 With the possible exception of the maverick claim at [Demosthenes] 42.20.
 - 17 Xenophon, *Poroi* 4.15–16.
 - 18 Conophagos 1980:341ff. for a figure of 11,000, Kalcyk 1982 for a figure of 22,100. Lauffer 1979 suggests that at the fourth-century peak over 30,000 slaves may have been working in the mines.
 - 19 Compare Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 3.6.12.
 - 20 See Lewis 1959:231.
 - 21 Demosthenes 57.35, 42.
 - 22 Cf. Theophrastos, *Characters* 16.12.
 - 23 Theophrastos, *Characters* 22.10; Lysias 1.8, 16, 37; [Demosthenes] 47.55–60; Menander, *Georgos* 56ff.
 - 24 So [Demosthenes] 47.56, Menander, *Samia* 236ff.
 - 25 Compare also the use of *doulos* and *oiketes* together in *Laws* 763a and 853d where it is similarly clear that the *oiketai* are a subset of *douloi*. I do not find any clear evidence for thinking that in the classical period *oiketes* (or *therapon*) could be used of a free man (contrast Wood 1988:49).
 - 26 The case for large-scale use of slaves was made by Jameson 1977, and from another angle by de Ste. Croix 1981. The case against is strongly put by Wood 1988.
 - 27 Xenophon, *Oikonomikos* 13, and see especially Garland 1988a.
 - 28 Osborne 1985:41 n.82.
 - 29 Garnsey 1985; cf. Osborne 1987:46 'about 40 per cent of which was probably exploited for agriculture of some sort'.
 - 30 Garnsey 1988 suggests 17.5 per cent as 'likely' area cultivated with cereals each year.
 - 31 Osborne 1992.
 - 32 Halstead and Jones 1989; compare also Davis 1977: chapter 2, part 4 (for modern Metaponto). The harvesting of olives can also be extremely labour intensive (see Wagstaff and Augustson 1982:113–20, table 10.12 and fig. 10.7), but unfortunately we have no way of assessing the area of olives in classical Attica nor how the olives were distributed between estates of rich and of poor.
 - 33 Halstead and Jones give a figure of 30 days for the harvest period, but that is allowing for harvest of wheat, which ripens slightly later, as well as barley. Since it is generally thought that barley predominated in the Attic harvest I have accordingly calculated with that in mind.
 - 34 Early modern English figures for reaping and binding are considerably lower than even the lowest of Halstead and Jones' figures: compare L.Meagre *The Mystery of Husbandry* (London, 1697) 66 and J.Mortimer *The Whole Art of Husbandry* (1707), both reckoning that a reaper and binder can manage 1 acre a day (i.e. 5 man-days a hectare for reaping and binding). Columella gives 1 1/2 days per *iugerum* for reaping wheat, 1 day per *iugerum* for barley (2.12.1). Halstead and Jones note that their highest figures are a product of having a high proportion of elderly women in the labour force, and that faster rates were expected of hired labour.
 - 35 Compare the conclusions of Halstead and Jones (1989:47) on how tight the harvest period is even for those who are farming the minimum area necessary for subsistence.

- Halstead reports (paper to Laurence Seminar in Cambridge, 25 May 1992) that Greek farmers themselves reckon that about 3 ha. of cereals is as much as the normal family labour unit can harvest.
- 36 Note that it is hired bands of harvesters who dominate the ancient evidence for hired agricultural labour: Xenophon, *Hiero* 6.10; Demosthenes 18.51. Cf. Euripides' satyr play *The Reapers*, put on at the same time as *Medea*.
- 37 Compare Osborne 1991 on Phainippos' strategy.
- 38 Osborne 1987:13–16.
- 39 Gallant 1991:11–33, 60–112.
- 40 Aristotle, *Politics* 1252b12 apropos of what is, interestingly, a misreading of Hesiod, *Works and Days* 405.
- 41 Halstead reports that elderly modern Greek farmers suggest that you need a farm of 5 ha. or more to make it worthwhile keeping a yoke of oxen (although some sharing of oxen between households does occur) (Laurence Seminar, Cambridge, 25 May 1992).
- 42 Todd 1990:168.
- 43 Aristotle, *Politics* 1334a20–1 quotes the adage 'no leisure for slaves'. See on this de Ste. Croix 1981:184.
- 44 Xenophon, *Oikonomikos* 4.2–4.
- 45 Aristotle, *Politics* (1277b33–1278a13).
- 46 Plato, *Theaetetus* (especially 166e–167b), and the myth in the *Protagoras* (320c–328c). See especially Farrar 1988.
- 47 It is worth noting that Aristotle goes on to discuss limitation of citizenship rights in some democracies to those born from two citizen parents. Has he changed tack here, or is he observing an unduly high proportion of those of mixed parentage among those performing banausic tasks? If he does associate those of mixed parentage with those performing such tasks, it might be the case that we should see Pericles' Citizenship Law as staving off a crisis resulting from citizens of mixed birth obviously lacking full citizen rights. Pericles' law would have solved this by redefining the citizen in such a way as to exclude these *banausoi*.
- 48 Demosthenes 22.55; compare also Xenophon, *Oikonomikos* 13.9 where treating slaves as simply body is part of treating them as animals, and so making the same assumption which lies behind Aristotle's 'natural' slaves.
- 49 For a marvellous illustration of this see Herodotus 4.1–4 (with the discussion by Finley 1980:118).
- 50 Aristotle, *Politics* 1253b23–1254a13. On the question of the relationship between slavery and technological underdevelopment see Finley 1965. It will be clear from what I go on to say that the presence of a substantial subservient work-force is in my view more important than the presence of slaves as such, in the juridical sense.
- 51 So Sinclair 1988:196–200.
- 52 Finley 1959:164 (=1968:72 and 1981:115). Finley 1980:89–90 comes much closer to stressing the ideological side (although with a curious emphasis on 'psychology').
- 53 Cf. Hansen 1991:318. Compare also Vidal-Naquet 1970.
- 54 This chapter has eschewed the explicit employment of comparative data from other societies. For a demonstration of just how illuminating such comparison can be, see Cartledge 1985.
- 55 Readers may find it instructive to compare what I have said with the account of Athenian slavery in Orlando Patterson's *Freedom* (London, 1991), which I read after completing my paper. Patterson perceives the political importance of slavery

at Athens, but stimulatingly views it in a rather different perspective, as the following quotation from p. 78 will suffice to indicate: 'The slave's alienness enhanced the value of the freeman's nativeness. And the master class, in turn, paid for its desecration of the community with the intrusion of slaves and other foreigners by making a special value of what it shared with all who were neither slaves nor aliens.' I am grateful to Paul Cartledge, Willem Jongman, Anton Powell, Guy Rogers, Stephen Todd, and students and staff in the Ancient History department at Leiden for comments on an earlier version of this chapter.

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HYBRIS, STATUS AND SLAVERY



Nick Fisher

And he (i.e. Solon, the Athenian lawgiver) went to such extremes that he permitted prosecution in the same way even where someone commits *hybris* against a slave...You hear, men of Athens, the humanity (*philanthropia*) of the law, which does not authorize *hybris* to be committed even against slaves.

Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* 21.47, 49

Perhaps someone, hearing this for the first time, will be amazed that this phrase is included in the law of *hybris*, referring to 'slaves'.

Aeschines, *Against Timarchos* 1.17

It was thought that he (i.e. Ktesicles) struck his enemy in *hybris*, not because of the wine, and that he took the procession and the drinking as his excuse and committed the offence, treating free men as slaves.

Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* 21.180

The whites forever feel and assert a superiority, and exact an humble submission from the slaves; and the latter, in all they say and do, not only profess, but plainly exhibit a corresponding deep and abiding sense of legal and personal inferiority. Negroes—at least the great mass of them—born with deference to the white man, take the most contumelious language without answering again, and generally submit tamely to his buffets, though unlawful and unmerited.

Judge Thomas Ruffin

Are we not forced, in spite of stern policy, to admire, even in a slave, the generosity which incurs danger to save a friend? The law requires a slave to tame down his feelings to suit his lowly condition, but it would be savage to allow him, under no circumstances, to yield to a generous impulse.

Judge Leonard Pearson

(Two opposed judgements in a North Carolina case, *State v. Caesar*, in which a slave had been condemned to death for murder, when going to the defence of a fellow-slave, being wantonly beaten by two drunk whites,

neither the master of either slave: quoted in Tushnet, *The American Law of Slavery. 1810–1860: Considerations of Humanity and Interest* 115–19)

THE PROBLEM AND THE ISSUES

Slavery, in one form or another, was ubiquitous in the ancient Greek *poleis*, and there are good grounds for arguing that Athens and Sparta, at least, and perhaps others, should be classified as ‘slave-societies’.¹ All such societies have to operate, on more than one level, with conceptions of the ‘natures’ of their slaves: how, that is, slaves differ ‘essentially’ from citizens and the other members of the community (e.g., in classical Athens, from women, metics, free foreigners, children), and how in consequence they should be treated. Such conceptions are to be found alike in a society’s legal system and practices, in its political system, in its philosophical, instructional or imaginative literature, as well, of course, as in the actual relations between slaves, their owners and other free people. As many studies have shown, in relation to many slave societies, conceptions of slaves among slave-owners are characterized above all by multiple and irresolvable contradictions, which often have the paradoxical function of better enabling the system of slavery to continue. One fundamental set of contradictions, well enough recognized, runs throughout Athenian law, Athenian social practices, discussions of slave-management, and theoretical justifications of slavery (such as Aristotle’s). On the one hand we find conceptions of the slave as a being with no rights or status to speak of, as having a nature essentially different from, and obviously inferior to, that of an adult free person, and more like that of an animal, a piece of property, or, at best, a permanent child; on the other hand we find conceptions of the slave as having some, albeit very limited, status and some claims to be a human being, with the potential for acquiring more status (e.g. by acquiring some form of freedom through the process of manumission).² This chapter focuses on how the complex and important concept of *hybris*, a concept whose core is the idea of an assault on status, operated in relation to slavery: the enquiry looks both at Greek literature (especially Homer and philosophical discussions of masterslave relations from the classical period) and at Athenian law and society (Athens is of course the only Greek city-state where the evidence permits such a detailed investigation). The aim is to suggest that such a study helpfully illuminates these contradictions in the conceptions and treatment of the slaves.

Hybris (as I and others have been arguing for some years)³ is essentially the deliberate infliction of serious insult on another human being. At the heart of the concept lies the idea of the personal honour (*time*) of the individual, and to treat someone hybristically is to behave to them as if they were of lesser status—*time*—than they can legitimately lay claim to. As Aristotle said, in what is by far the best ancient discussion of *hybris*, ‘dishonour (*atimia*) is characteristic of *hybris*’ (*Rhet.* 1378b23–35). In a society whose members greatly value honour, and strongly fear shame and dishonour, such insults might be deeply felt, and gravely affect the standing of individual victims in their communities. *Hybris* appears consistently as the most resonant term to apply to cases of serious insult, often, but not necessarily, involving physical force, violence or restraint. More ‘traditional’ interpretations of *hybris*, still commonly found in scholarly discourse and perhaps even more commonly among

the ‘chattering classes’, see it as human arrogance, over-confidence or unawareness of the reasons for one’s own good fortune. These are misconceptions of the last two centuries, whose prevalence reflects more general, and damaging, tendencies to see the nature of Greek religion through Christian eyes, and to interpret Greek tragedy through reliance on over-simplified formulae (e.g. in terms of the *hybris* of heroes provoking the *nemesis* of the gods).⁴

Successful *hybris*, if not resisted, legally or extra-legally, might then inflict a lasting blow to its victims’ honour; hence it was taken very seriously as a major danger to the cohesion of any society, as a cause of *stasis* or civil war.⁵ The identification of a specific act as an act of *hybris*, and the assessment of its severity, depended necessarily and fundamentally on the view taken of the relative honour or status of the agent and of the victim. Now slaves, by definition, are at the bottom of the status ladder in any society where they exist, and this fact must have had a major effect on the identification of acts involving slaves as acts of *hybris*.⁶

First, slaves might commit *hybris*, against their masters or other free men. Here, obviously, any form of rebellion, disobedience or assertion of anything approaching equality of status (unless clearly permitted) was likely to be condemned as *hybris*: for example (jocularly) Dionysus in the *Frogs* objects to his slave Xanthias’ riding the donkey, while he walks (Ar. *Frogs* 21), and (more cruelly) Menelaus tells Andromache, whom he has just cruelly tricked, that she must learn that being a slave means not committing the *hybris* against free people of speaking openly (Eur. *Andr.* 434). As such cases show, behaviour which would be expected, normal or at least tolerable, when committed by a free man or woman, when committed by a slave may be condemned as *hybris*. In a more political context, Nicomachos the state slave in charge of the revision of the laws has, according to his prosecutor, attained such *hybris* that he thought the city’s possessions were his own (Lys. 30. 5).⁷ An adroit political application of this principle can be found in Demosthenes’ *Third Philippic* (9.30–2), where he contrasts Philip II’s aggressive policies with the earlier aggression against the Greeks committed by Spartans and Athenians: the latter are compared to the faults committed by legitimate, wealthy and noble sons, whereas Philip’s sequence of hybristic acts are likened to those of a slave or supposititious child, a ‘pest’ from an ignoble part of the barbarian world, from which ‘it was never hitherto possible to buy even a decent slave’.⁸

Second, however, and at first sight more surprising, the possibility of *hybris* committed by free people against slaves is in fact more frequently canvassed in classical Greek texts. What is even more surprising, and has baffled modern interpreters, is that the text of the Athenian law against *hybris* explicitly includes slaves among the possible victims. It is this apparent paradox which will be the chief focus of this chapter. We shall be concerned essentially with the ideologies of Greek slave-owners and their contradictions, as revealed both in literary and philosophical texts and in Athenian law. Some attention, necessarily limited by the lack of evidence, will be given to relationships between slaves and their masters. The fundamental question may be put thus: in the provision of legal and moral protection to slaves against *hybris*, do we have a genuine co-existence of ‘slavery and humanity’,⁹ or rather a significant, and ideologically revealing, example of what have been called ‘tokenisms within the framework of slavery’?¹⁰

The text of the Athenian law against *hybris* is preserved, almost certainly accurately, in our texts of Demosthenes' speech against Meidias, composed in the 340s BC:

If anyone commits *hybris* against anyone, whether child or woman or man, *whether slave or free*, or if he does anything improper (*paranomon*) against any of these, let anyone who wishes (*ho boulomenos*) of the Athenians to whom this is permitted bring an action (*graphe*) before the Thesmothetai.

(Dem. 21.47)¹¹

If *hybris* is essentially treating people, deliberately and openly, as if they had less honour than they could legitimately claim, how could the law suppose that such an insult could be committed against slaves, and, worse, that such an insult could deserve the severity and dignity of a legal process and remedy? Surely, it may be said, slaves, beings patently at the bottom of the social ladder, had no honour, or certainly no honour that merited legal notice. Or, since the Greeks could—as Demosthenes does in the very same speech against Meidias—describe the offence of *hybris* as 'treating citizens as if they were slaves' (Dem. 21.180, quoted above), how could there be *hybris* against slaves? If that were extended so that treating people as slaves were taken to be an adequate definition of *hybris*, then to commit *hybris* against slaves would be to treat slaves as slaves, which seems absurd.¹²

Many commentators on the law have seen a serious problem here. I shall give three examples, from scholars of the greatest eminence, if from radically different traditions. Louis Gernet, in his early Paris thesis of 1917, asked 'what is the honour of a slave', and used this as part of an argument for a different interpretation of the meaning of *hybris* in the law; I have argued in detail against Gernet's views elsewhere.¹³ A.R.W. Harrison's magisterial *Law of Athens* accepted the interpretation of the term as 'dishonour', but suggested the 'speculation', when discussing the improbability of an outsider ('anyone who wishes') prosecuting an alleged offence by a master against his own slave, that 'the necessary ingredient for *hybris* of intention to insult could by a sort of fiction be supposed between a third party and slave, but could not between a master and a slave.'¹⁴ Orlando Patterson's powerful and well-argued comparative study of slavery focuses above all on the alienation, degradation and dishonour imposed on the slave, in all societies where slaves have been found; he describes the general condition of slavery, tellingly, as 'social death'. In conformity with this approach, on the *hybris*-law, he uses the elaboration of *hybris* as treating citizens as slaves to ridicule the idea that the law could consider *hybris* against a slave a serious offence; it must, he concludes, have been a dead letter, and the idea of a conviction under it 'an absurdity'.¹⁵ Such comments seem to oscillate between the suggestion that *hybris* against slaves, especially by their own masters, was in itself inconceivable, or an absurdity, or must involve a 'fiction' of an intention to insult, and the less extreme view that prosecutions, let alone convictions, were extraordinarily unlikely.

We need to consider first, then, the more extreme assumption that because *hybris* is serious dishonouring, it is in all circumstances an inconceivable offence against slaves who have no honour, and along with it the parallel position that it would be almost as inconceivable that one might give honour to a slave, while still treating him or her as a slave. As the passages quoted at the start (and others like them, to be

considered later) suggest, fourth-century Athenian orators recognized that this inclusion of slaves as potential victims was a surprising feature of the law which was open to rhetorical exploitation.¹⁶ But it should be noted that these orators who then proceed to explain this surprising aspect of the law at no point suggest that anyone might doubt the possibility of committing *hybris* against slaves; what they compliment the Athenians on is the provision of legal protection to deal with such acts, that is, the fact that the law took such care for slaves.¹⁷ Hence I shall first demonstrate that it was a commonly expressed idea, despite its apparent conceptual contradiction, that masters, or other free persons, might, but should not, commit *hybris* against a slave, that is, might inflict serious ‘dishonour’ on a slave victim; and that this fits well with a more general willingness, found in texts from Homer to the end of the fourth century), to concede to slaves some share in honour and status.

Second, I shall consider the question of the introduction of the law in Athens. I accept the traditional view that it was in fact Solon who proposed the *hybris*-law, and who made the decision to include these few words protecting slaves in its text. It is worth asking why he might have done that, in relation to what we can surmise of the nature of Athenian slavery and Athenians’ conceptions of their slaves in the early sixth century. This will involve some discussion of other possible Solonian laws related to slavery, in relation to the slave/citizen distinction as then conceived. Further, one may ask how the decision to offer some protection to slaves fits with what must be taken to be the primary purpose of the law, to guarantee and protect the status, and the bodily inviolability, of all Athenian citizens.

Finally, the understanding of this feature of the law in fourth-century Athens, the time of Demosthenes and Aeschines, will be considered. If the law had been in existence for a couple of centuries or so, what can be said about its interpretation and its rhetorical exploitation in our surviving law court speeches? Can we seriously believe that it was ever used to bring an Athenian (whether master or third party) to court for his (or her) treatment of a slave? Did the provision have any impact on master-slave relations? In what ways did changes in the Greeks’ conceptions of their slaves’ natures and the justification of the institution affect the understanding of the law and its political or rhetorical use in law-court speeches? Finally, did this use undermine, or reinforce, the function of the *hybris*-law as the assertion (however inadequate in practice) of some basic equality of status for all adult male citizens, in contrast to the acknowledged, and carefully differentiated, inequalities imposed on women, children, metics and other foreigners, and slaves?

SLAVES’ HONOUR, AND *HYBRIS* AGAINST SLAVES, FROM HOMER TO ARISTOTLE

First, then, I shall consider some of the relatively abundant evidence from imaginative or instructional literature which asserts (or implies) that the proper management of slaves involves some recognition of their moral capacities, and their consequent claims to be honoured, and that clear, unjustified dishonouring or degrading of a slave by a free person should be condemned, and may be called *hybris* against the slave.

Homer

The Homeric poems form the obvious starting point. The difficulties involved in the attempt to reconstruct a coherent ‘Homeric society’ from the poems, let alone in locating it in historical time and space, are well known, but fortunately need not be discussed at length in this chapter.¹⁸ What matters here is the overall picture given in the poems of relations between masters and their female domestic and male agricultural dependants, above all in the *Odyssey*, and their implicit or explicit ideological justifications; the Homeric picture matters above all because the later generations of Greeks, including the Athenians on whom this chapter will focus, treated the poems as especially important and powerful literary and educational texts.

The *Odyssey*, unlike the *Iliad*, contains elaborate, patterned contrasts between characters who are mostly drawn in black-and-white terms. This feature matches the main narrative thrust portraying the successful and justified revenge taken by Odysseus over the suitors.¹⁹ Hence in the household and estate of Odysseus there are, on the one hand, idealized and admirable relationships between masters and slaves, full of decency, fair treatment and trust, and on the other hand there are pictures of slavish insolence and betrayal, which meet with condign punishment. Some of these scenes and speeches reward attention; while in fact no free character is explicitly said to commit *hybris* against a slave, it will be evident that such a usage would make excellent sense in the moral and linguistic patterns of the poems.

It will also be necessary to restate the common view, that we should conceive of all the dependants in the households of ‘kings’ such as Odysseus as essentially chattel slaves, enslaved after capture in war or purchase from pirates or traders.²⁰ An alternative view, proposed above all by Walter Beringer, has attracted some support: this is that in the *Odyssey* there is a distinction between one set of servants, called *dmoes/dmoiai*, who are to be seen as ‘integrated’ feudal-type serfs, born and bred inside the community, and with families and households of their own, and another set of less frequently mentioned slaves, those who had met their ‘day of slavery’, who are bought or captured outsiders, and used as chattel slaves, and especially, if female, as concubines.²¹ This approach has, in my view, little if any evidence in its favour, and above all it fails totally to account for the actual ‘careers’, as described, of the main slaves in the poem, and the language used to describe their persons and activities. Most of the crucial passages (above all *Od.* 17.320ff.) are quoted and considered in the following discussion.

The poem’s interest in differentiating between good and bad slaves, and ensuring that each finally receive their deserts, is brought out in large part through the description of the mutual, if asymmetrical, granting or withholding of honour, seen in relation to the relative statuses of the slave and free characters. This pattern of ‘moral’ description in terms of honour and reciprocity matches very similar patterns of judgements made on relations between free people, for example between the suitors and Odysseus and his immediate family.

The slave portrayed in the greatest detail is Eumaios. He was a bought slave, though significantly of Greek—and noble—birth before his capture (15.390–484),²² and is patently the worthiest slave in the poem. It emerges that he has been given responsibility not only for large swine herds but also for four other slaves (hence

‘leader of men’ is an epithet often used of him); they all live together in Eumaios’ own farmstead. He had expectations, should Odysseus return, of being further set up by a properly grateful master:

who would have befriended me kindly (*endukeos ephilei*),²³ and granted me
property,
as a good-hearted king grants to his servant (*oikeus*),
a house, an estate, and a much sought-after wife,
to a servant, one who has laboured hard for him, and god has prospered
his work...

(*Od.* 14.62–5)

It is significant, and does serious damage to Beringer’s distinction between ‘feudal’ herdsmen/domestics and chattel slaves/concubines, that such a model slave, constantly called *dmos* (e.g. 21.244), was purchased by Laertes. He had indeed been used to being treated with honour and friendship from the time he had first been bought, when still a little boy; he tells the disguised Odysseus how Laertes’ wife Anticleia had brought him up along with her daughter Climene, and ‘honoured me only a little bit less’, gave him fine clothes on his manhood and sent him to work in the country estate, ‘since she was really fond (*philei*) of me in her heart’ (15.361–70). Equal damage is done to Beringer’s distinction by the example of the model female slave, Eurycleia, Odysseus’ faithful and cunning nurse, who was also purchased by Laertes when a girl, at a price of twenty oxen, and whom Laertes in fact ‘honoured equally to his excellent wife’; he might well have slept with her, had he not wished to avoid his wife’s anger (1.428–33).²⁴ The relationship between Eumaios and Odysseus is presented as exemplary, surviving under great strain, and triumphantly restored. Eumaios is introduced to us by Athena as the most loyal and devoted of his slaves (13.404–6). He appears in the scene where he meets Odysseus disguised as a beggar, and reveals, then as later, his resourcefulness, loyalty and a sound understanding of the reciprocal values of his society, and how they may be held to apply to slaves. The speech from which the extract above comes, where he welcomes the beggar inside his farmhouse, displays his grasp of how even a slave, albeit a relatively independent one, should uphold the reciprocal code of hospitality to guests (*xeinoi*):

Guest (*xeinos*), it is not right (*themis*) for me, even if one worse than you
should come,
to dishonour a guest. They are all under the care of Zeus,
guests and beggars; the giving is slight and yet dear (*phile*)
that comes from us: that is the way for slaves (*dmoes*),
always afraid when the lords that give them commands are young.

(*Od.* 14.56–61)

Thus we have on the one hand the loyal male slaves like Eumaios, Philoitios, or the elderly Dolios and his hardworking six sons, who has already been rewarded as Eumaios hopes to be, and presumably will be; contrastingly, we have the slaves who willingly collaborate with the suitors, whose representative is Melanthios the goatherd, the son of Dolios who went to the bad. His multiple offences, succinctly

revealed in the telling scene when he meets Eumaios and the beggar on the way to the town, make him the classic example of the uppity, lazy, and ungrateful slave (17.204–60).²⁵ First, he shows his hostility to loyal slaves by his verbal assaults on Eumaios. Second, he displays the contrary attitude to that of the ‘noble swineherd’ towards the poorest type of *xeinoi*, as he abuses and kicks the beggar, indicating by his insults, actions and threats of future violence the pleasure a slave who feels supported by those in charge of the house may derive from putting it over free men of low status, not solidly attached to any household. Third, it appears from Eumaios’ indignant response to him that Melanthios puts on uppity airs and perhaps clothes; and also, fourth, that he neglects the proper supervision of his subordinate goatherds: Eumaios prays that the Nymphs may bring about Odysseus’ return so that

he may scatter in all directions all the fine airs (*aglaiai*)
which you now flaunt in *hybris*, wandering ceaselessly
through the town; meanwhile bad herdsmen ruin the flocks.

(*Od.* 17.244–6)

Fifth, Melanthios’ complete ingratitude and disloyalty is shown in his response to this rebuke; he threatens to get control over Eumaios and sell him—again—overseas, and hopes that Telemachos will be killed by the suitors, and that Odysseus is indeed already dead; and this is further underlined by his proceeding straight in to sit with the suitors, opposite the one he had closest relations with, the equally devious and unpleasant Eurymachos. We thus find in this scene what is in fact the sole case in Homer where a *hybris*-word is used to describe the insolence of the low-class individual asserting an illicit status, and dishonouring at once his master’s household, a fellow-slave and a poor *xeinos*. Melanthios’ behaviour is thus the appropriate correlate to the suitors’ *hybris*, in the form of their sustained rejection of the poem’s dominant values of reciprocity and hospitality.²⁶ He meets a spectacularly humiliating death, in which he suffers a complete mutilation of his extremities.

On the female side there is an equally clear contrast. The model of good behaviour is the old nurse and most authoritative of the female slaves, the excellent Eurycleia (a bought slave, it should be remembered), who is totally loyal, knows Odysseus intimately enough to recognize him by his scar, is strong enough to keep the secret, and helps him in the final scene, if only in a subordinate role, barring the door and keeping the women under control. The disloyal, insolent and treacherous domestics are led by the daughter of Dolios, Melanthios’ sister Melantho, who is equally rude to the beggar, and is rebuked in one of his moral re-tellings of his alleged former adventures. Melantho too is disloyal and ungrateful, since she had been especially cared for by Penelope, yet chose not to share her sorrow, but to share friendship and bed with Eurymachos (18.321–5). She too is gratuitously rude and threatening to the beggar, and flaunts her extra finery (*aglaia*) among the other *dmoiai* (19.80–2).²⁷

Eurycleia herself, as she had earlier offered, is only too happy to tell Odysseus which maids deserve punishment, in a speech that deserves quotation for its valuable moral judgements. It is one of two important passages which spell out explicitly how these standard values are applied to those in slavery; both are also crucial for the controversial question of the precise meaning of *doul-* words in Homeric Greek. After the deaths of the suitors, Eurycleia faces this question from Odysseus, just after

he has definitively condemned the suitors for their refusal to honour anyone, good or bad, who came to them:

Come now, give me the account of the women in the house,
which ones are dishonouring me and which ones are innocent.

She replies:

There are fifty women here in the palace,
serving maids (*dmoiai*), whom I taught to work at their tasks,
to card wool and to endure their slavery (*doulosynen anechesthai*).
Of these twelve in all stepped over into shamelessness,
not honouring me or Penelope herself.

(22.421–4)

These twelve are then punished by an especially humiliating death by hanging, to match Melanthios' mutilation, also described with gusto and more than a touch of (gallows) humour.²⁸

In the phrase *doulosynen anechesthai*, 'endure slavery', we find the only occurrence of the abstract noun *doulosyne* in Homer. It has caused commentators difficulties. Most, I think rightly, interpret it to mean here, as in later Greek, the general condition of being a slave rather than being free. Some, it is true, think that it indicates rather the more specific idea of 'servile labour';²⁹ but the passage seems to make better sense if Eurycleia is saying that she taught the maids under her charge both the specific servile tasks such as wool-working and also a more general acceptance of the need to make their enforcedly humiliating status more bearable by entering into the proper, reciprocal, 'honouring' relations with masters and superior slaves. A further and compelling argument for taking *doulosyne* to mean 'the condition of slavery' is the use, considered immediately below, of *douleion emar* to indicate the day of enslavement. It appears that Homer, or perhaps the epic tradition as a whole, chose not to use *doul*-terms for slaves and slavery at all frequently, preferring to employ for his standard references to domestic and agricultural slaves the perhaps softer-sounding *dmos*, *dmoie*; but the terms then, as later, meant, I think, the condition of chattel slaves.³⁰

Even less likely, in my view, is the view taken of the phrase by those who wish to make a strict division between foreign slaves (*douloi*) and integrated, feudal serfs. This holds that we should accept an alternative reading in this passage, namely *doulosynes apechesthai*, and to interpret it as 'to abstain from concubinage'; the argument is that in Homer the feminine *doule* and the abstract *doulosyne* (found here) were applied specifically to bought female slaves used as concubines.³¹ This reading and translation is certainly not demanded in order to give sense to the passage; indeed, on this interpretation the focus in the description of the offences of the wicked slave-girls would be concentrated too much on their sexual activities, and insufficiently on their general failure to show proper respect and loyalty to their true, and fundamentally fair, masters and mistresses.³² It may just be possible (though not, I think, plausible) to see *doule* and *doulosyne* in the three Homeric passages as all referring to slave-concubines; but the adjective *doulios*, as will be seen, cannot be taken that way, and it seems difficult, if not impossible, to explain the major gap thus created between the nouns and the adjective.

This argument is reinforced above all by the last and most important Homeric passage, which brings the day of slavery, *doulion emar*, and the *dmoiai* into even closer relations. The lines conclude the touching scene in which Argos the old dog, neglected on the dung-heap, recognizes Odysseus, as he reaches the palace just after the scene with Melanthios. The emphasis in the tale is on the neglect of a valuable and cherished hunting-dog; this is presented as a telling indication of the decline of the house, since there is no effective control over the slaves. Eumaios points the moral:

‘Now he is held fast in a terrible state, and his lord, far from his country,
has perished, and the women show no care and do not look after him;
for *dmoes*, when masters no longer give them orders,
are no longer then prepared to work as is appropriate.
For far-sounding Zeus takes away half the goodness (*arete*) of a man,
when the day of slavery (*doulion emar*) takes hold of him.’

(17.322–3)

This famous passage with its quotable, and misquotable, *sententia* in the last two lines, is as interesting as it was influential (on its use by Plato, see below). First, the run of the argument confirms conclusively that, in general, *dmoes* (and *dmoiai*), those who do the main agricultural and domestic work of a rich household like that of Odysseus, are essentially chattel slaves, likely to have been enslaved at a single moment during their lifetimes, specifically on the *doulion emar*, the day of slavery. Any attempt to see a systematic distinction in Homer between chattel slaves and more ‘feudal’ agricultural and domestic servants has to avoid the obvious implications of this passage.

Second, the phrase ‘when the *doulion emar* takes hold of one’, like the parallel phrase put the other way round ‘take away the day of freedom (*eleutheron emar*)’, seems *prima facie* to focus on the impact on the individual of the shattering and totally dishonouring experience of being enslaved, whether by being captured as one’s city is destroyed (cf. the passages in the *Iliad*, 6.454, 16.831=20.193), carried off by pirates, or sold. This is, I think, correct, and should not be weakened.³³ There is no need to suppose that the emphasis in these phrases in the Iliadic contexts is on the change of status for the city as a collective rather than for the individual women and children enslaved;³⁴ both are surely involved, and certainly, to take just the first example, the emphasis in the highly emotional first passage, Hector’s speech to Andromache, is strongly on the particular impact of enslavement on his wife as she is dragged off screaming, above all the rest of the suffering for the lost city’s inhabitants (6.446–57). Similarly, I see no need, as does Wickert-Micknat, to place the chief emphasis in these phrases on the beginning of dependence and its work rather than on the loss of freedom.³⁵ Both are involved, but it seems perfectly legitimate to find in these phrases, as in the more detailed discussion in Eumaios’ speech, a profound understanding of enslavement as the sudden, and final, loss of one’s former social status and identity, and the beginning of a wholly new, and inferior and degrading, life. One may, then, compare this insight with the more elaborate modern analyses of the emotional effects of enslavement, such as Elkins’ famous comparison of the experience to the arrival of victims at Nazi concentration and extermination camps, or Patterson’s general portrait of slavery as alienation and ‘social death’.³⁶

But the emphasis in the generalizing lines on the point that enslavement takes away the new slave's 'excellence' (*arete*) has caused uncertainty and confusion in modern commentators. Some find the argument so unclear that some inapposite addition of a proverb is suspected (by the original poet or a later one);³⁷ or it is supposed that originally the phrase 'day of slavery' grew in a context where enslavement meant castration for captured males and rape and concubinage for captured women, and that in this context removal of half one's *arete* carries some memory of those specific acts, and the subsequent contempt in which such slaves were held.³⁸

But all of this misses the emphasis on the act of enslavement, with its sudden and catastrophic loss of status, and the effect this may be held to have on the personality and motivation of the slave. The key to understanding the argument is, I think, through the intimate connection in Homeric—and indeed in later Greek—discourse between *time*, social status, and *arete*, the performance of one's allotted social role to the best of one's individual ability.³⁹ As Sarpedon's famous and paradigmatic exposition to Glaukon makes clear, the heroes at the top of the power and status ladders in Homeric society feel obliged (given the facts of mortality) to maintain their conspicuous positions of wealth, power and *time* by consistent and conspicuous performance as warriors and leaders of their communities (*Il.* 12.310ff.); that this generally accepted obligation can lead, in specific situations, to conflicting views and tragic decisions and dilemmas (e.g., in different ways, for Achilles and Hector), is now well recognized.⁴⁰ Those who can hope for much lesser glory, such as ordinary footsoldiers, or respectable wives, are still expected to seek it by fulfilling well their supporting roles.

But those suddenly enslaved see a very large proportion of whatever *time* they possessed stripped off, and their chances of recovering it removed, apparently for ever; hence not only must they learn, as Eurycleia observed, to endure slavery and to exercise a new set of skills and duties, but the effect of the loss of status and hope, it is plausibly thought, removes from many of them the desire even to show the new type of 'goodness' that will now be demanded of them.⁴¹ Hence Eumaios, seeking to offer an acceptable 'explanation' for the neglect of the dog by the domestics in the house, and, by extension, for their general neglect of the duties owed to the house, invokes the idea that enslavement removes, in many cases, status and self-respect, and hence the desire to perform well, from many slaves. A further supposed sign of incoherence in the argument is the fact that he speaks of the *arete* of a man (*aner*), while the faults which need explanation are those of the female domestics;⁴² but this affects the argument much less at the level of slaves, who are expected, whatever their gender, to perform duties efficiently and loyally, than it would at the level of (say) 'kings' and their wives. This belief that slaves as a rule had lost much of their self-esteem and lacked the motivation to obey their masters justifies other features of slave-management, such as careful scrutiny, strict discipline, and the heaviest punishments when they err.

But the sentence in its context carries a further important qualification, contradicting its general applicability. Eumaios, its speaker, is the most notable of a number of exceptions in the poem to his own theory; he is a *dmos*, a bought slave, who retains a remarkable capacity for displaying the proper *arete* of a trusted and relatively independent slave, and he will be rewarded for it at the end. Slaves like Eumaios

and Eurycleia, therefore, who do their duty, make the best of their slavery and can judge securely the failings of others, deserve to be honoured appropriately, while slaves like Melanthios and the naughty slave-girls who sleep with the suitors receive, and are arguably felt to deserve, especially dishonouring deaths.⁴³

It seems then that no one in Homer actually claims that any specific act is *hybris* against a person of slave-status, while Melanthios' generally disobedient and arrogant behaviour is explicitly hybristic (*Od.* 17.245). But the suitors' acts against the beggar, the uninvited guest (*akletos*), are certainly hybristic (*Od.* 18.347, 381; 20.284ff.), like their other acts that subvert and destroy the ways a well-run noble household should behave towards those who visit it. It would be impossible to deny, I think, that to deal with good slaves like Eumaios and Eurycleia as savagely as Odysseus dealt, as just punishment, with Melanthios and the wicked slave-girls could easily be called *hybris*. Such slaves, as we have seen, have claims to be honoured, in return for their willing performance of the roles of loyal slaves and their striving for the degree of *arete* (allegedly 'half') open to them; and hence the conclusion is inescapable that serious dishonour to such slaves could be called *hybris*. Equally, what the suitors are doing to the serving women is described by Odysseus in strongly shaming terms: if he were Odysseus, he says (just before revealing that he is), he would rather die than continue to have to:

‘watch shameful deeds,
men maltreating guests (*xeinon*) and dragging around
the servant women degradingly (*aeikelios*) through the fine halls.’
(*Od.* 16.107–11)

Here it may not be wholly clear whether ‘the beggar’ supposes the women to be willing accomplices in the suitors’ sexual pursuits—in which case the dishonour of these disgraceful acts falls on the house, and on Telemachos; or whether, as is more likely, he is to be taken as supposing that they are being manhandled or raped—in which case they are also the victims of this violently degrading behaviour.⁴⁴ In either case, this behaviour is part of the suitors’ general *hybris* against the house (as the phrase used by Telemachos just earlier suggests, 16.85–7); and in view of the other evidence adduced so far, the conclusion is inevitable that such slaves could be seen in their own persons as victims of hybristic behaviour at the hands of such transgressive enemies of the household. Slaves in Homer are not treated as mere property, or as beings beyond the moral patterns of human society: they are explicitly included within the moral system of the reciprocal giving of honour, hospitality and respect. Hence, as humans with their admittedly lessened claims to status, they should, if they deserve it, be protected from *hybris*; though as a result of the trauma of enslavement, they may find it very difficult to behave within this system, and need to be treated accordingly.

Classical Advice on Slave-Management

Surviving discussions of the best ways of treating slaves are not wholly consistent.⁴⁵ They do not in fact operate with precisely the same conceptions of the nature of slaves, though contradictions can be found inside each individual set of conceptions. But one consistent feature of these discussions is that they all recognize, with varying

degrees of explicitness and consistency, that slaves have (minimal) claims to honour, and that it is both proper and advantageous for masters to recognize (and exploit) these claims.

Xenophon

The advice contained in Xenophon's *Oikonomikos* is directed above all at a combination of encouragement and firm rule, though the general impression may well be thought to offer a somewhat simplistic and over-optimistic picture. There is repeated advice that one should seek to create goodwill among one's slaves, and above all to offer material inducements and honours as appropriate. His elementary slave-psychology distinguishes between ordinary slaves and those who may be selected, as showing extra qualities, for training and use as overseers (*epitropoi*). Much of the discussion is directed at identifying, and then training, these more responsive slaves.

Xenophon emphasizes throughout the desirability of encouraging all slaves to be loyal and enthusiastic in their work, and at times can speak of all slaves as responding to hopes and rewards in the same way as do free men. In an early chapter in praise of agriculture, he applies to the management of slave farm-labourers the same principles of rule over men that are appropriate to kings or generals commanding soldiers: the labourers should be encouraged to be enthusiastic and willing to obey, and they are said to 'need good hopes no less, but actually more, than free men, to make them remain' (5.14–16).⁴⁶ Later, it is future overseers who must be selected for their loyalty (engendered by good treatment and goodwill), and for their carefulness, freedom from drink and desire for boys, moderate desire for wealth, and capacity to respond to praise and honouring (12.5–16). When he reaches the techniques that overseers themselves are to employ in their 'rule' over slaves, there seem to be two categories of slaves involved. Those in the first category are assimilated to animals (and a type of 'education for beasts', *theriodes paideia*, is held to be effective); they may best be persuaded to be obedient with the provision of better food, clothes and shoes. But 'the more *philotimoi* of natures are spurred on also by praise; for some natures are hungry for praise as others are for food and drink' (13.6–9).

He further advises teaching his trusty overseers to train the slaves to respond to justice (*dikaiosyne*), in effect meaning that they should refrain from theft of the crops, using the same techniques as the laws of Draco and Solon—in imposing penalties—and those of the Persian King—in offering incentives (cf. the similar points made about the training of the housekeeper at 9.12–15). Thus Ischomachos claims that his own practice, and the one he recommends to overseers, is to encourage just behaviour and responsiveness to praise among his slaves: he spells out the connections between desire for honour and praise, good behaviour of slaves, and (quasi-) freedom. With respect to those who are most eager to receive his praise he says:

'I treat them as free men, not only making them rich, but also honouring them as "gentlemen" (*kaloi kagathoi*).⁴⁷ For I believe, Socrates, that the honour-loving (*philotimos*) man differs from the man who loves gain in the respect that he is willing, for the sake of praise and honour, to work where necessary, to take risks, and to refrain from shameful gains.'

(14. 6–10)⁴⁸

As for Eumaios, so for Ischomachos some slaves do retain considerable natural potential for the love of honour, *philotimia*. If they pursue that through the exercise of the goodness and justice appropriate to slaves, they deserve to be treated well, as if they were free or even of high status; though I strongly suspect that some of the language used, making his slaves ‘rich’, and treating them as ‘gentlemen’, is intended to suggest a tone of humorous exaggeration.

One must equally recognize that Xenophon balances the emphasis on praise and rewards with a repeated insistence, albeit in studiously vague and unspecific terms, on the need for severe penalties for theft or disobedience, and the creation of a climate of fear among the slaves (e.g. 3.4, 9.15, 12.19, 13.6, 14.2–5, 21.12). This preserves well the contradictions of slave-treatment; on the one hand, severity, and a desire to assimilate them to domestic animals, and on the other hand incentives and moral encouragement, and an attribution to slaves, or to some slaves, of a variety of (almost) fully human drives and ambitions. As with Homer, though, it can surely be concluded that in Xenophon’s eyes to maltreat, contemptuously or sadistically, a slave who showed the potential for *philotimia* and justice towards his master, could naturally be said to constitute *hybris*, which would be harmful for slave and master alike.⁴⁹

Plato

Plato’s fullest treatment of the problems involved in the legal and social treatment of slaves comes in his last work, the *Laus*. In essence he too attributes to slaves some minimal intelligence and moral capacity and in consequence allows to slaves some (small) amount of honour which needs to be protected. We shall see, however, that he is more concerned than was Xenophon to set precise limits on such honorific treatment. One may note first that the details of his penal code reveal some pretty savage penalties for offences committed by slaves, and that such penalties are usually more severe—or in some cases significantly different—than for the same offences committed by free persons or citizens. Plato appears to advocate punishments with reference to a combination of criteria: the wrong done; the degree of injustice in the soul, and hence the curability, of the offender; the statuses of the offender and (where appropriate) the victim. So, as in Athens and indeed most slave societies, slaves are regularly flogged (and may be flogged ad lib by the victim, whereas a foreigner receives the same number of lashes as blows inflicted), and free persons are whipped only in the rarest instances; and slaves often receive heavier punishments (often, indeed, capital punishment, indicating terminal incurability), because they are also offending against their superiors, and hence against the boundaries of status that Plato believes must be safeguarded. On the other hand, for example, for temple-robbery, slaves (and foreigners) get savage whippings and expulsion naked, and for theft of public property they get fined, but citizens in both cases get death.⁵⁰

His brief section on the treatment of slaves shows him aware of many problems—not least because he has in mind helotage, and the current controversies following the decline in Spartan power, as well as chattel slavery.⁵¹ His advice on treatment is to castigate those who place no trust in their slaves; such people, he claims, cite in justification the Homeric lines discussed above about the effects of enslavement on

the slaves. It is interesting, however, that his quotation differs in three significant ways from our Homeric texts, and in all respects the proverb becomes less striking, and more hostile to the slaves; and he introduces it with standard praise of Homer as ‘the wisest of the Greeks’, which might *prima facie* suggest his general approval of the saying, if not of the extreme use to which it was often put by savage slave-owners. Plato quotes the lines thus:

For far-sounding Zeus takes away half the share of sense (*nous*)
of men, whomever the day of slavery may take hold of.

Three changes are found in the text, which are all certainly to be attributed to Plato; whether we have deliberate choice or unconscious, but significant, alterations is harder to decide.⁵² The variations may at first sight seem slight, but they amount to a significant change of emphasis. The verb change (*apomeiretai* for *apoinetai*, ‘removes a share/right from’ for ‘strips away’) suggests that enslavement was a rather more legitimate and acceptable practice, sanctioned by a just Zeus, than an arbitrary and cruel act of chance. The change from ‘of a man, when...’ to ‘of men, whomever...’ similarly suggests a shift from the concentration on the individual, shattering, act and its effect on an individual, to the more general observation of the deficiencies of all slaves. Correspondingly, the phrase ‘the day of slavery’ (*doulion bemar*), may well, by constant repetition, have become a phrase that can at times indicate ‘the continuous, daily, state of slavery’, rather than ‘the moment of enslavement’.⁵³ Most important of all is the shift from *arete* to *nous*. This puts the emphasis away from the slaves’ reduced capacity for correct action, and onto their limited intelligence and understanding; the point is made much more harshly, by these harsh slave-owners whose views Plato is giving, who claim that there is ‘nothing healthy in a slave soul’. Finally, Plato has quoted this saying as if it were the unqualified judgement of the ‘wisest of the poets’, suppressing the tension in the text between Eumaios’ words and his own example.

But Plato’s own position in relation to the quotations remains ambiguous. He has quoted it in this sharpened, more intellectualist, and slave-condemning way, and introduced it as if it had the status of a received truth, yet has distanced himself partly from it by attributing its quotation to the cynical masters, some of whose whip-loving activities he then says make slaves’ souls a thousand times more slavish (777a-b). Perhaps we should conclude that in his view there is much truth in the sentiment, but that our duty should be to work to improve the slaves’ limited capacities for understanding.⁵⁴

In this passage, Plato is equally critical of those masters who were over-indulgent or familiar, as he evidently thought many Athenians were.⁵⁵ His explicit recommendations bring the ideas of honouring and dishonouring slaves into the centre of the discussion:

one should look after slaves correctly, not honouring them (*protimountas*)
only for the slaves’ own sake, but even more for their own: proper treatment
of such people consists of not committing any *hybris* against the slaves (*oiketai*),
and indeed one should do them less injustice, if that is possible, than one
should to one’s equals.

(777c)

This text confirms that *hybrizein* is a contrary of ‘honouring’ or valuing, that slaves, even though they have for Plato less mental and moral capacity than free men, nonetheless have some, and deserve not to be treated hybristically. The text further suggests that what he understood as *hybris* against slaves—treating them, in fact, as animals if one wants to complete the phrase—would be in the first instance savage or excessive beating, which was not justified by previous offences or ill-discipline, while it might secondarily be sexual abuse;⁵⁶ Plato does insist that proper beatings are wholly necessary. One may think of some cases from law court speeches, such as the allegations of the maltreatments of Teisias (Lysias fr. 17) and of Pittalacos (Aesch. 1.54ff.), where acts that have strong overtones of savage torture and beatings are described as *hybris* when committed against a free boy, or against a ‘state-slave’ who appears to have the legal status rather of a metic/freedman. Of course, to count as *hybris* against a slave such behaviour would have to be gratuitously sadistic or abusive, not remotely justifiable as punishment.⁵⁷

Plato’s concerns are partly for the sake of the ‘souls’ of the slaves, that they should not become much more ‘slavish’—which I would suppose to mean essentially that they should not be driven into hatred and rebelliousness rather than into unresponsive and lazy docility—the ‘Sambo’ stereotype of Southern states ideology (cf. 793e, where the point is picked up in the course of a similar discussion about not overbeating or spoiling boys). We can find similar points being made in Diodorus’ analysis of the Sicilian slave revolt (based on Poseidonius), where the revolt is held to show the real dangers of uncontrolled hybristic abuse by slave-owners; while Myron of Priene applies the term *hybris* and the analysis of its dangers to Spartan regular maltreatment of the helots.⁵⁸ On the other hand, Plato’s view that over-lenient and familiar treatment of slaves is also dangerous, because it makes slaves spoiled and disobedient, is found in Aristotle’s observations on the helots; he claims that given relaxed treatment the slaves become hybristic and want equality with their masters—here we have another example of *hybrizein* used in the sense of inferiors asserting themselves ‘insolently’; but if they were treated harshly, they tended to hate their masters and plot against them (*Politics* 1269b9ff.). That both dangers may be thought to lead to serious discontents may also be illustrated many times from the evidence from the Southern states. One could compare the evidence of slaveowning apologists, who describe what they claim to be normal practices which avoid such evils; or equally, one could point to plausible descriptions also of the harsher realities, for example in the slave narrative of Frederic Douglass, who reacted violently—and partially successfully—to the sustained attempt to break him, and also conceived an overwhelming desire for freedom during periods when he was treated more humanely.⁵⁹

But Plato is thinking, it seems, more of the masters, and their need to avoid all taint or suspicion of *hybris* in their ‘souls’ (he is engaged in some fairly radical redefinition of the concept of *hybris* as well, on which I have written elsewhere).⁶⁰ He sees rule over slaves as a form of absolute power or tyranny, in which one may hurt those weaker as often as one chooses; hence it is an excellent testing ground for a man’s real commitment to ‘revere justice’: if in relation to one’s character and actions in the treatment of slaves a man ‘remains unpolluted with regard to the unholy and the unjust, one would be especially effective in sowing the seed of *arete*, virtue’ (777d-e). It is not immediately clear whether the seed is sown in the slaves or the master, and

Morrow and Saunders both suggest (tentatively) that it may be the slaves' potential for virtue that is under consideration.⁶¹ While Plato might allow some such potential, the line of the argument strongly suggests to me that it is the masters. As he said above, it is above all for the masters' own sake that they should avoid *hybris* and injustice towards slaves, and it is the masters' capacity to remain pure in the face of absolute power that this sentence is concerned with. A sudden switch to a concern for slave virtue seems most unlikely. As Klees notes, and we shall see again later, the Athenian orators claimed that one purpose of the Athenian law protecting slaves was to make citizens less likely to commit *hybris* against other, more important, victims such as citizens, and Plato is surely making a similar point in his own way.⁶² For all its importance for slaves and masters, however, Plato will not give the slaves the *legal* protection they enjoyed, in theory, in Athens; after his positive assertion that in this area masters could do just what they liked, it seems that he proposed to give his slaves in Magnesia no legal recourse of any sort against ill-treatment or degradation. Not only does he have no appropriate general law of *hybris*, but he also offers no protection to slaves under any other head, nor any right of asylum. Nor does he allow any plea of such treatment to mitigate a case where a slave himself retaliates, in anger or self-defence, against a master or against another free man (868, 869, 879, 882).⁶³ Rather than legislate to defend slaves, he presumably preferred to hope that the educational system, and above all the massive ideological drive against 'atheism', the ultimate cause of the impetus to commit all forms of injustice and *hybris*, will create the necessary self-control and correct desires in citizens and slaveowners.⁶⁴

Aristotle and Pseudo-Aristotle

Aristotle's complex theory of slavery in the *Politics* has been submitted to many penetrating analyses in recent years, and no full discussion is needed here. It has been shown that Aristotle failed fully to realize, let alone reconcile, the different, competing, conceptions of slaves' natures in his theory. First, the presentation of the slave as a tool or piece of property, or as closer to domestic animals or children than to adult humans, can justify Aristotle's 'despotism', a strict and permanent role by a wholly superior being; these views seem in fact to be based on an extreme version of the argument that many barbarians were natural slaves, who benefited from the state of slavery. But such views are less well suited to justifying some of the actual mechanisms of slave-control, guidance and development of friendly relations Aristotle alludes to, which often seem to be based rather on a model of slaves who possess adult human emotion and some capacity to follow reason, though not to initiate it. Even more damaging to the firm view of natural slavery is Aristotle's strong recommendation of manumission as an incentive, to be offered to slaves who presumably therefore possess or have acquired enough human reason and emotional control to be able to operate effectively, as metics/freedpeople, in society. Aristotle's theory thus very neatly brings out the fundamental contradictions in the system.

In the main discussion in book 1 of the *Politics* Aristotle does not give explicit advice on the treatment of slaves; but, as we saw earlier, he did hold that over-severe treatment of the helots led to hatred and revolts (1269b9ff.), and would doubtless say much the same as do our other authors on the dangers of hybriatic

sadism and cruelty to security, to slave-relations and to the masters' characters. It is notable in fact that he criticizes Plato, perhaps unfairly, for not recommending that slaves be given the moral grounds of the orders they are given (1260b5, with reference to *Laws* 777e), which, like other passages, suggests that instinctively he paid more attention to the second, more optimistic, set of views of slaves' natures, that is that a good many slaves could in fact be trained and educated into freedom, regardless of the damage this did to the theory of natural slavery.⁶⁵

The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Oikonomika* contains a number of swiftly delivered judgements and advisory statements, which have been derived above all from a combination of themes from Xenophon and Aristotle. The author works essentially with the more optimistic, educational model of slaves' natures and behaviour, as he puts particular emphasis on the training of those slaves who are to be in positions of trust (*epitropoi*). He then recommends that slaves must be treated according to their deserts; they should not be allowed to be hybriatic, nor should one oppress (*anian*) them; the more 'free-spirited' (*eleutherioi*) should be rewarded with a share of *time*, and the workers with greater amounts of nourishment. Like Aristotle, he holds that they should be given the goal of manumission to aim at, and also, more toughly, that dangers of revolts and of flight be avoided by allowing them to have children, as hostages for their good conduct; like Plato, he also holds that they be selected from different nationalities (*Oik.* 1.5).⁶⁶

We have seen, then, that all these instructors agree in granting some role in their theories to slaves' desire for, and their right to be rewarded with, at least some share in honour and status; and the Aristotelian works, at least, positively recommend offering the slaves the major, tangible, status-promotion of manumission. At this point it is worth alluding, however briefly, to the very large numbers of well-meaning, patronizing, and often contradictory statements to be found in the writings of Southern planters and in the literature produced to justify slavery against the abolitionists' attacks in the Southern states in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Klees quotes a number of passages where planters emphasize the need to offer hopes of rewards, and to train slaves like horses. We can also find in the pamphlets many comparable assertions of the masters' kind and humane attitudes towards their slaves, and the slaves' responses to such kindness and rewards with devoted friendship. I add a few more examples. We find simple statements of the kindness and justice of the master: 'Is not the master kind and indulgent to his slaves? Does he not mete out to them for faithful service the reward of his cordial approbation?' (Thomas Roderick Dew, 1832). We find assertions that masters, for the most part, were aware of their moral responsibilities not to maltreat slaves: '[The slaveowner exercises his power] under the highest moral responsibility, and is most guilty if he wantonly inflicts misery and privation on beings more capable of enjoyment and suffering than brutes' (William Harper, in 1838).⁶⁷

We find too contradictions in these defenders' conceptions of slaves' natures, which often remind us of the Greek material. William Harper, for example, according to the argument in hand, presents black slaves as uncivilized savages, close to the beasts; as perpetual children (and hence regular beatings are not felt as degrading, but on the other hand contented and cheerful beings are better than sullen ones); as beings of 'superior intelligence and usefulness' to animals, capable of responding to

kindly treatment, yet very slow learners, permanently inferior to whites, and unable to benefit from literacy and education; none the less as beings whose natures were softened and improved by being enslaved to the higher and more civilized individuals. One major difference seems to be that most apologists, responding as they were to the hostile, abolitionist, arguments from the north and from Europe, did not complicate their position as much by proposing widespread manumission as a justified incentive; manumission was in fact extremely rare in the US system, and was increasingly restricted by law, as demand for slaves remained very high, the slave-trade had ended and the Northern states offered refuge.⁶⁸ In general, of course, apologists minimize, absurdly, and by stout denials, the extent of actual beatings, the incidence of sadism and cruelty, of sexual abuse, and of disruption of families: Harper feels able to assert (cf. Plato) that 'the tendency of slavery is rather to humanize (i.e. the slave-owners) than to brutalize'.

SOLON AND THE LAW

In the light of this evidence for continuities in the attitudes and in their contradictions found in the works of serious thinkers towards the treatment of slaves, we may return to the question of why the Athenians decided to include the slaves within the provision of such a major and serious law as the *graphe hybreos*. As a start, it is perhaps worth pointing out that the Southern states of the USA were all engaged in extensive and changing legislation and debates over how far to intervene in the rights of slave-owners and other free men to treat slaves as they chose. Such laws as the states did possess, offering protection to slaves against homicide and cruelty, were subject to developments, and might become either harsher or more extensive; but they were operated, by procedures and by judges' decisions and guidance, in ways that systematically limited the chances which slaves actually had to get cases to court, to have their cases sensibly heard, or to get verdicts in their favour. Analyses of the laws of the various states and their operation reveal irresolvable contradictions in the laws and their operations, between the promptings of a broadly paternalistic set of values, that accepted a degree of humanity, feelings, rights and status in the slaves, a hard-headed awareness of the needs of control and continuance of the slave-system as a whole, and the demands of a more market-orientated system.

Learned Southern judges explored the contradictions with sophistication. Some tended to accept the overriding claims of the system, i.e. to let the masters have full control, however unpalatable the consequences (e.g. Judge Thomas Ruffin of South Carolina); others were prepared to allow, in the name of humanity, charges against cruel masters, or permit slaves to enter pleas of self-defence against intolerable treatment when accused of assault or homicide. But besides many other considerations, it seems that one major reason for the general ineffectiveness of the various laws protecting slaves against murder or ill-treatment was that slaves were not permitted to testify in court against whites, and another was that where courts were prepared to convict, they were much readier to find against poor white slave-owners or overseers than against gentlemen.⁶⁹ There are then obvious parallels with the position of slaves in Athens (as well as some differences). Slaves in Athens could not bring cases

themselves (cf. Plato, *Gorg.* 483b, ps. Dem. 53.20) or give evidence except under torture (and this seems to have meant in effect that slave-evidence was scarcely, if ever, heard).⁷⁰

Some Southern apologists (e.g. James Henry Hammond) saw value (or ideological ammunition) in the protection the laws offered the slaves. Others could blandly assert that laws which were harsher on the free-born classes were introduced under pressure from Northern abolitionists, and had counter-productive effects; they felt, as did some judges like Judge Ruffin (and so had Plato), that the system worked best when control of masters' anger or cruelty, like control of slave-offences, was left to the moral and religious sensibility of the local slave-owning community rather than to the laws.⁷¹

Now I hold, on a variety of grounds, that the traditional attribution of the law to Solon is probably in fact correct, and that it was seen by him as a major example of the *graphe* procedure, perhaps even the *graphe par excellence*. He designed it, I think, to encourage all citizens to use the law to protect each other and foster harmony in place of conflict; more specifically, he was concerned both to reduce aristocratic, contemptuous and violent behaviour against fellow-citizens, which could easily lead to *stasis*, and also to offer full legal protection to yet weaker members of the community, such as women inside the household, orphans and others.⁷²

Glenn Morrow, and more recently Oswyn Murray, have argued that the inclusion of slaves in the law is itself an argument for a Solonian date.⁷³ Their arguments focus interestingly on the nature of slaves in Solonian Athens, and the social settings of possible insult to them. I find these speculations suggestive, especially as there are other grounds for believing in an early date; they may help to explain how Solon may have felt it proper to include slaves as victims of such a serious law, while doing no more than American lawmakers did to try to ensure that prosecutions were actually brought.

In the Greek world of the late Dark Ages, partially reflected, perhaps, in the Homeric poems, such chattel slaves as existed were at least as likely to be Greek as non-Greek. In the Athens whose crisis Solon was called on to deal with, there appear to have been, in addition to (probably) relatively few chattel slaves, both Greek and non-Greek, a good many share-cropping *hektemoroi*, not all of whom by any means were necessarily close to destitution, some peasants (or *hektemoroi*) reduced to debt-bondage, while others had been sold into slavery abroad.⁷⁴ If any prejudice already existed against *barbaroi* as natural inferiors, it is unlikely to have been strong as yet.⁷⁵ Now one key theme throughout Solon's laws has been plausibly argued to be the establishment of more fixed and firm boundaries, physically in the landscape, legally in terms of status and wealth distinctions (inside and outside the fundamental distinction between citizens and the rest), and indeed mentally.⁷⁶

Solon's economic, legal and political reforms combined to stabilize the peasant-citizen (and his heirs) on his land, protected him against future debt-bondage or enslavement, and invited him to take a greater share in the government of his city (including the legal process, through the *graphe* as well as through the citizens' court).⁷⁷ On the one hand he established new, more complex, hierarchical boundaries between the citizens, based now on wealth, not birth (the four *tele*), and with it the idea that the rich deserved more honour, status and political power (cf. fr.5,6); on

the other he also established, through the *graphe hybreos* and other measures, the notion that the honour of each citizen was of very considerable importance, and all citizens should feel their vital interests involved if it was seriously assaulted.⁷⁸ In effect, therefore, he did much to create the concept of citizenship, and gave it a very substantial content.

Correspondingly he also legislated to fix firmer boundaries in social life between slaves and free men.⁷⁹ Many of these measures, as Murray points out, have especial reference to the aristocratic lifestyle. Thus slaves were not to be permitted to exercise or have the dry oil-rub in *palaistrai*, play the active part in pederastic relationships with boys, or abuse their position as *paidagogoi* (Aesch. 1.10, 138–9, Plut. *Solon* 1).⁸⁰ One may note that pirate-bands are included in the list of approved associations contained in Solon's law which allowed such bodies to make their own regulations, provided they did not conflict with the laws of the city.⁸¹ This allows the speculation that Solon may have been aware that such groups were often engaged in importing slaves to the Greek world. Solon may or may not have realized that one major consequence of 'freeing' the Athenian peasants was to be a very substantial increase in the number of non-Greek chattel slaves, in Athenian agriculture (and later in other sectors of the economy).⁸² He expected that in future no Athenian would be a slave in Athens, and could have surmised that the slave population, however big or small, would become more exclusively non-Greek. He was certainly concerned to make the status-barriers between citizens and such slaves more firmly fixed or more widely evident in social life, to increase the importance and value of freedom and citizenship.⁸³

Despite this, however, his habits of mind were probably still used to Greek as well as non-Greek slaves; as a result he is unlikely to have felt so much dehumanizing prejudice against the slave-population that he would have wished to exclude slaves from all forms of legal protection against serious maltreatment. The more specific question then should be why Solon should protect them with his new law of *hybris*, which was above all designed to bolster the sense of freedom and partial equality of status of his citizens, especially since in other areas he sought to emphasize the distinction between free and slave in social life.

It is not an adequate answer to say that it was the needs of the masters' property which demanded such protection. Mactoux, in her valuable discussion of Solon's laws concerning slaves, explores this possibility, explaining the extension of the law of *hybris* to slaves in terms of the protection of the master's property—'to do violence to a slave is to do violence to the master according to the form of master-slave relations evident in the other Solonian laws on slavery.' But such a conception would surely have been satisfied by protecting masters' property rights in the law of 'damage', as Solon almost certainly did with the *dike blabes*.⁸⁴ This suggestion fails to do justice to the essence of dishonour in *hybris*, and the perceived public importance of its control. These factors seem to demand that Solon had a conception of the honour of the slave which needed protection, if danger to the interests of the community was to be avoided.

A more complex line is taken by Murray, who suggests that the honour both of the slaves and of the masters may be involved. He envisages particularly insults or rapes offered to the valued slave entertainers at the *symposion*, where the master's

sense of honour was particularly likely to be offended if a fellow-guest or intruding komast outraged his favourite.⁸⁵ In such contexts one might also suppose that Solon was influenced by insults which had been regularly offered to debt-bondsmen or *bektemoroi* who might have been reduced to appearances as ‘unbidden guests’ (*akletoi*) at the feasts of the rich (cf. perhaps Solon fr.4.6ff. and the attractive arguments of Bernhard Fehr).⁸⁶ If that is a relevant consideration, there might be a parallel with sexual *hybris* against a wife, explicitly said by the outraged husband in a lawsuit to be *hybris* against both husband and household (*oikos*).⁸⁷ Such favourite slaves would be thought to have some honour in themselves, and their masters to have invested more of their own honour in their persons.

But this is unlikely to be the whole story. All in all there seem more than enough reasons to suppose that Solon would not have found it difficult to think that slaves had some little honour, and that the law should send a signal to the free population, including the slaves’ owners, that it expected them to respect it. This would also involve the supposition that slaves were then, as earlier and later, conceived alike as property, as degraded and inferior humans, and yet as humans with some very limited status and capacity for good behaviour of their own. Solon is likely enough not to have thought of slaves as radically different in race or nature from free persons; in many cases he will have seen them well integrated inside the household, or intimately connected with masters in the contexts of the *gymnasion* and the *symposion*. While his economic reforms contributed, in the longer term, much to the change in the racial composition of Attic slaves, and while he himself was much concerned to increase the ideological significance of freedom by a sharper definition of the social boundaries between free and slave, he could easily have thought that their limited honour even so deserved some legal protection.

Even more importantly, Solon surely wished to give the clearest signal, by indicating that even slaves were potential victims of legally significant *hybris*, that society’s needs made it crucial to repress all types of *hybris* (in much the same way that later orators express the point).⁸⁸ Since he asserts in his poems that *hybris*, above all by the rich, was a major cause of the *stasis* that might bring Athens to ruin, it is a further indication of its importance in his thought that he was prepared (at least in principle) to offer protection to slaves even against their own masters. There is no reason to believe, however, that Solon sought to make it particularly likely that a slave victim would be able to use this law. By making it a *graphe*, at least in theory he did something to avoid the problem of complete lack of access for slaves to the courts; but the slave would have to find a free man willing to bring an action. Whether a torture-provision already existed making it more difficult, or painful, for slave evidence to be heard is not possible to say for certain; an act was passed, probably in 510/9 BC, prohibiting the judicial torture of citizens, which had previously, in all probability, been permitted in cases involving the state. This makes it at least likely that it was already a feature of Athenian law that slave-evidence could only be admitted when it was taken under torture.⁸⁹ At all events, the distinction between slaves, foreigners and citizens would probably have been marked in some way.

We should conclude, then, that a vague concern for the honour of slaves, and a more serious concern for the honour of all citizens, including many slave-owners, and the general well-being of the community, are ample justification for Solon’s

inclusion of slaves in this law. Once more we seem to find evidence for the characteristic intrusion into slave-law of an element of humane concern, when it is supported by other motives, which has more to do with the masters' collective interests, and which is implemented in ways which reveal no serious intention to upset the primary interests of individual slave-owners.

SLAVES AND THE LAW IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

If, then, Solon introduced the principle that slaves' honour deserved some protection from the law, how was this principle understood, or rhetorically exploited, in the fourth century BC? Before returning to the texts of the orators, it is necessary to consider briefly changes in the nature of the slave population and their employment in Athens, and in Greek attitudes towards slaves and foreigners, which occurred between the times of Solon and of Demosthenes.

There is no doubt that by the fourth century there had taken place a massive expansion in the number of slaves; second, that the great majority of them were non-Greek in origin; third, that the development of the economy, and the intense ideological opposition which all citizens had developed to working for other citizens, produced considerable diversification in the slaves' employments, responsibilities and chances of eventual freedom; and finally that there had also taken place a concomitant sharpening of the ideological perception of a strict polarity between Greeks and 'barbarians'.

I start with this last theme, the 'invention of the barbarian', well explored recently by Edith Hall.⁹⁰ Slight qualifications are necessary, I believe, to her generally persuasive picture. No doubt it was the terror, and then the triumph, of the great Persian wars of 490–79 BC that firmly fixed and fully established these perceptions; but one might suspect that Greeks' awareness of their cultural and political differentiation from, and indeed superiority over, other neighbouring peoples may have got well under way through the second half of the sixth century. Contributing and connected factors would have been the greatly increased use of barbarian slaves in Athens and no doubt other cities;⁹¹ growing contacts with the Persians and their subject peoples as the Persian conquest grew in the eastern Greek world; and an increased consciousness of Greek political and cultural innovations, and hence the value of freedom, at the time of Cleisthenes' reforms in Athens, other similar moves towards democracy elsewhere, and the Ionian revolt and its immediate aftermath.⁹²

More specifically in Athens, we can perhaps trace some interesting developments and transitions between the late sixth and early fifth centuries, the period of the Peisistratids' tyranny and the growing democracy. The idea that deep drinking of unmixed wine is characteristic of barbarians like Thracians or Scythians, and best avoided, some or all of the time, surfaces both in sympotic poems (e.g. Anakreon fr. 356a and b) and also in the Spartan allegation that learning this habit was the downfall of their maverick King Kleomenes (Hdt. 6. 84). In the series of so-called 'Anakreontic vases', in which Athenian revellers are displayed wearing Scythian caps, or Ionian and Persian luxurious clothes, beards and parasols, it may be possible to see, over the period c. 520–470, a shift from playful aristocratic imitation of Eastern

luxury (*babrosyne*) to more critically 'burlesque' performances of decadent and Persianized luxury.⁹³ Again, it may be significant that in place of the Peisistratids' Scythian mercenary troops, whose bows and equipment were very frequently shown on Athenian vases,⁹⁴ after a gap (of uncertain length) the young democracy introduced a band of about three hundred state-slaves charged with guarding prisoners and maintaining public order. Their official title, the 'Scythian archers', may perhaps reflect a deliberate reaction against the tyrants' earlier foreign, free allies as well as the consciousness of the essential barbarian sources of the Athenians' public and private slaves.⁹⁵

Second, as these ideological processes were without doubt greatly accelerated, after the Great Wars and the liberation of the Aegean and Asia Minor, Hall seems to connect the generally sharpened polarity between inferior, savage and slavish barbarians and superior, civilized, free and imperial Greeks too specifically to the developments of Athenian democracy and the Athenian empire; it is more likely to be our evidence that is so heavily Athenocentric rather than the phenomena themselves, though doubtless the processes operated with particular force in imperial Athens.⁹⁶

What I wish to explore here are the consequences and implications these complex processes are likely to have had for the Greeks' conceptions of the justification of slavery and of slave-management, and also for the Greeks' ideas about *hybris* and its dangers for their societies. I too will have to limit the enquiry largely to Athenian developments. It will also be suggested that further implications may follow for the interrelationship of these concepts, that is for the desirability of offering slaves legal protection through the existing Athenian law against *hybris*.

As slaves in most Greek cities became essentially non-Greek, simultaneously most or all 'barbarians' came to be seen as inferior in intelligence, spirit or both, and hence to merit enslavement. These ideas were intimately connected with the increased pride felt by all Greeks in their conceptions of political freedom, and in Athens and other 'democratic' cities with the developments towards *isonomia* and democracy, which also involved the notable extension to all citizens of a high sense of 'honour'.⁹⁷ The Greeks' sense that only they understood and could achieve political freedom was no doubt also reinforced as they became aware of the ingrained habit of the Persian rulers of referring to all their subjects as their slaves. A revealing document here is the Greek version of Darius' letter to his Ionian satrap Gadatas, in which he calls even this high official his 'slave' (*doulos*).⁹⁸ The whole process whereby all Greeks eventually fought off the threat of 'slavery' from the Persians is likely to have further strengthened the tendency for the *doul-* terms to become the commonest, standard terms for chattel slavery.⁹⁹ Another consequence of the Persian period of dominance in Ionia, and the defeat of the invasions of 490 and 480–79, was a long-standing drive among the Greeks for revenge over the Persians' aggressive imperialism (often described, of course, as *hybris* in Greek texts from Herodotus and Aeschylus onwards). This theme of revenge was finally to be realized, after a fashion, by Alexander the Great. This drive too will have affected the attitudes of many Greeks to their own enslavement of many of the Persians' subjects.¹⁰⁰

During the course of the fifth century the more systematic development of articulate political and cultural theories associated with the sophistic movement included the

elaboration of varied 'racial' stereotypes of Asiatics, Scythians, Thracians, and so on, which enhanced both the justification of slavery in general and also the delineation of different types of slave-jobs as appropriate for slaves from different regions (for example, menial and physical tasks for the tough, but mentally undeveloped north-eastern peoples, and more demanding, responsible jobs for the more intelligent, but docile, Asians). The most coherent and (pseudo-)scientific expression of these ideas is found in the Hippocratic work *On Airs, Waters, Places* (esp. chs 12–24), where both climatic and political considerations are held to determine national characteristics, and the results, not surprisingly, tend to reinforce the suitability for slavery of the Greeks' various neighbours.¹⁰¹ More subtle differentiations between wider varieties of peoples can be found in the ethnographic portions of Herodotus' *Histories*; in this text one can find a pervasive concern to identify and classify, on complex grids of distancing, varied forms of non-Greek, or 'other' customs, values and social structures. Athenian tragedy contains much that supports, and some material that subverts, the basic cultural distinctions between weird, uncivilized, over-emotional or slavish barbarians and calmer, more rational and free Greeks.¹⁰² Fourth-century writers show the ideological stereotypes, and connections with the justification of slavery, flourishing as strongly as ever, for example in Isokrates, Plato and Aristotle.¹⁰³ There was of course as much confusion and contradiction in these ideological stereotypes and what passed for supporting argument as in all such racist and slavery-justifying views, and Greeks who wished to hold on to such ideas had to pass over much recalcitrant evidence, and ignore some limited critiques, for example in tragedy and in the work of a few of the sophists.¹⁰⁴ But the ideology stayed powerful and probably dominant, reinforced as it was by many strong needs, not least of which was the desire to feel justified in the continued enslavement of foreigners. It was a process of mutual reinforcement of convenient ideas, which is strictly comparable to the mutually supportive increase of chattel slavery and beliefs in the inferiority of all African peoples found in the slave states of America.¹⁰⁵

But there is no reason to suppose that this process of racist justification of slavery led to a complete dehumanization of the slaves whom Greeks owned, any more than racial ideology did in the Americas. The practical needs of slave management in an economy of growing complexity, coupled with ideals of humanity or paternalism that cost little to express, worked together to keep a comparable balance of contradictory conceptions and principles in the classical period (as we have in part seen already, looking at the works of Xenophon, Plato and Pseudo-Aristotle). As the economy developed further, in manufacturing and trading as well as in agriculture, citizen and metic operators needed trusted managers and foremen; precisely because the ideological importance of freedom and independence, in the context of slavery, was so great for the free, opportunities were created for a minority of slaves to be given more responsible and intellectually demanding jobs, and greater independence of action. Thus arose the *choris oikountes*, the slaves who lived on their own, and worked, for example, as farm overseers, trusted managers in banking and independent slaves engaged in inter-*polis* trade. Others given special privileges and semi-independent lives were many of the public slaves.¹⁰⁶ These developments apparently helped to produce, by the mid-fourth century in Athens, the creation of a special category of 'mercantile cases'; at the courts which

heard these cases slave-agents seem to have been given the legal personality denied to slaves elsewhere in the Athenian legal system.¹⁰⁷ Other slaves, no doubt, were given, as in earlier centuries, especially trusted roles inside the household. All or most of these more privileged slaves also were permitted to wear better clothes (i.e. less distinctively servile), had greater expectations of being permitted to have children (though not necessarily to have their families kept together), and of being granted their freedom (often on disadvantageous terms) at some point before their deaths.¹⁰⁸ Hence, despite the increased barbarization of slaves, a reasonable number of slaves in Athens, and the most prominent of slaves at that, were fulfilling roles that entitled them, they must have felt, to be given more ‘honour’ and protection than the rest; and some of these groups also had more advanced legal status, that put them in some respects on a social level closer to that attained by metics (who included freed ex-slaves).¹⁰⁹

Now if one considers the few actual cases of *hybris* or *hybris*-related charges that we hear may have been brought by or on behalf of those who were, or may have been, of slave status, it comes as no surprise that the individuals concerned all come from these relatively privileged groups. First, one ‘slave’ who was clearly treated hybristically (on the account we have) and who came quite close to being able himself to take legal action to win revenge, was Pittalacos, whose moving story is told in Aeschines’ speech against Timarkhos (1.54ff.). He was apparently a state-slave, whose status appears markedly superior to that of slaves owned by individuals. He had felt sufficiently on a level with the citizens who frequented the gambling and cock-fighting establishment he seems to have run that he engaged in rivalry for the affections of the youthful Timarkhos; and after receiving a terrible, and deliberately humiliating, whipping at the hands of Hegesandros (he was clearly treated as if he were an ordinary slave, giving trouble), he started the legal process of an assault charge, a *dike aikeias*, but felt compelled to drop it as he realized the power and influence of his opponents.¹¹⁰

Second, as we saw above, there is a possibility that Solon’s law of *hybris* envisaged as likely slave-victims *hetairai*, flute-girls or other entertainers or sexual partners at the *symposion*. It is noticeable that in our law court speeches most victims of abuse whose status might have been slave or otherwise inferior, and whose outraging might conceivably produce a legal action, seem to fall into similar categories. We hear of a Rhodian lyre-girl who was treated with *hybris* at the Eleusinian festival, as a result of which, allegedly, her outrager, Themistios of Aphidna, was executed; this was probably a *probole* case, a special action to do with wrongdoing at a festival, and it is not clear whether she was a slave, a freedwoman or a foreign metic (Deinarkhos, *Dem.* 23).¹¹¹ Demosthenes cites a *probole* case where the archon, trying to rescue a flute-girl, was himself assaulted by a man involved with her, motivated by drink, love and his inability to recognize a magistrate in the dark (*Dem. Meidias* 21.36–8). Other supposed ‘slaves’ whose hybristic treatment could arouse popular concern were Greeks about whose enslavement many had qualms or guilt; after Philip had destroyed Olynthos, we hear of one Olynthian woman who was allegedly outraged by Aeschines and others at a Macedonian *symposion* (*Dem.* 19.196ff., Aeschines 2.4, 153ff.), and of another who was placed in a brothel (*Dein. Dem.* 23).¹¹² But we do not know enough about these cases to know in what circumstances

they did, or might, reach the courts, let alone attain convictions. The case of Pittalacos, who dropped the case in fear of his powerful opponents, does not suggest that it would be easy for such privileged slaves, or for freed persons, to succeed in the courts, let alone for ordinary chattel slaves.

There is yet another complicating factor affecting the rhetorical use of *hybris* in relation to 'barbarian' slaves. An important aspect of the prevailing ideology built on the barbarian/Greek contrast involved claims that oriental or Western 'barbarians' in positions of power were even more prone to display the aggressive *hybris* and savagery of imperial or monarchical powers than were powerful Greeks; such *hybris* was regularly exercised on their own 'slavish' subjects, but might equally be directed against the Greeks. This became a major theme of the rhetoric with which the Greeks congratulated themselves after their victories of the first quarter of the fifth century; most obviously in Aeschylus' *Persians* and in Herodotus.¹¹³ The imperialist aggression and *hybris* of foreign powers—Persian kings such as Cambyses, Darius or Xerxes, or Etruscans and Carthaginians in the West—focused initially on the basic attempt to remove Greek freedom, and was heightened by grandiose outrages against the gods and by brutal savageries.¹¹⁴ In Herodotus' work, one particular image among many—that of the whip—brings together a number of themes especially well. In the famous Scythian story of the rebellious bastard slaves, born through the misalliance between Scythian women and their slaves during the brief rule of their Scythian lords in Asia, the rebels were cowed by the display of the whip, the symbol of their rightful dominance, where they had shown no fear of warlike weapons (4.3). This story not only distinguishes between natural barbarian slaves, who know their place when faced with the whip in the hands of Scythian or Greek masters;¹¹⁵ it also connects thematically with a constant stream of stories in which Persian rulers use whips on their subjects or armies (or, in other cases, they mutilate them), or on foreign priests (Cambyses in Egypt), or even against the gods or forces of nature, most offensively and futilely in Xerxes' angry whipping of the Hellespont.¹¹⁶

A further rhetorical heightening of these indictments against hybriatic and uncivilized barbarians assimilates them, in literature and above all in art, to the traditional excessive *hybristai* and savages such as the Giants, Titans, Typhoeus, Centaurs or similar creatures. Such assimilations, constantly repeated, further the contrasts between Greek freedom, culture, self-control and sobriety, and Persian, oriental or Scythian slackness, brutality, enslavement or drunken excesses.¹¹⁷

But on the other hand, while, wherever possible, in the denunciation of a Philip II, a Meidias or a Demosthenes, orators would make use of alleged barbarian origins to 'explain' their hybriatic excesses or other wickedness,¹¹⁸ Greeks still could not, and did not, dismiss *hybris* solely or essentially as a barbarian or oriental vice. *Hybris*, whether seen as the abuse of power by tyrants, oligarchs, or even by a ruthless democracy, or as the behaviour inside the city of unruly elite individuals like Alcibiades, Meidias or Conon, remained a serious and an ideologically significant threat to Greek communities, and one which could take markedly varied forms. The remarkable stability of the Athenian democracy, and preparedness of many of its citizens to seek revenge when attacked through the complex operations of the legal system rather than through self-help, no doubt did achieve a considerable reduction

in the levels of violent and insulting behaviour between pre-Solonian and classical Athens. But the threats posed by the impetus towards *hybris* of the rich and powerful were by no means extinct, and the official rhetoric of the democracy insisted that all citizens had good reason to be on their guard about it.¹¹⁹

In the light of all these developments, in some respects contradictory, we may reconsider the question of how Athenians during the late fifth and fourth centuries perceived the proper application of the law against *hybris* to slaves. On the one hand, slaves would have seemed much more numerous, and potentially more threatening; as a class they would have appeared significantly more alien and less 'human' as a result of the process of 'barbarization', yet (as the Old Oligarch and Plato grumble) the more privileged, better-clothed and independent slaves may have seemed hard to distinguish in daily life from the free.

It might be rash to conclude from all this, however, that slaves would not have been included as victims if the *hybris*-law had been first framed in the fifth century, rather than in the early sixth, and that instead the Athenians might have been content with some protection against violence and maltreatment of slaves in the laws dealing with damage (*blabe*), assault (*aikeia*) or violent acts (*biaia*).¹²⁰ It seems to me, first, that the idea remained strong that even barbarian slaves retained sufficient 'honour' for *hybris* against them to be both conceivable and undesirable; this emerged very clearly from the slave-management literature considered above. Second, the common contradictions of slave-ideology in Athens, as elsewhere, were deep-rooted enough that few would have been seriously troubled by them in this instance; further, this double-sidedness was strengthened by the development of responsible slave jobs and the growth of manumission. Third, the paramount consideration would once more be that in order to protect citizens and their more honoured dependants such as their women and children, *all* types of *hybris* must be deterred, by being threatened with the ultimate legal penalties. None the less, the paradox of the provision is emphasized in our sources, and it probably did seem considerably starker and more startling in this period, because of the changes in the origins of slaves and in the ideology of their inferiority which we have been considering. Hence the extension of the law to protect slaves is the subject of the rhetorical *topos*, in which the protection is presented repeatedly as a puzzle which calls for explicit justification, and thereby offers orators splendid opportunities for elaborate exploitation.

Of the four versions of the *topos* exploiting the paradox that we know of, only two come from complete texts. Aeschines' speech against Timarkhos is devoted to demonstrating that his political opponent, now at least forty-five years old, had in his youth repeatedly acted, in effect, as a call-boy or prostitute (had committed *betairesis* or *porneia*), and as a result was now ineligible to serve as a fully active citizen, for example by speaking in the assembly or bringing cases in the courts.¹²¹ He cites the *hybris*-law among many others, in order to demonstrate the official Athenian concern to protect under-age boys and youths from sexual abuse and enforced prostitution, and to impose sanctions on young men who voluntarily prostituted themselves (Aeschines 1. 13–36). After citing the *hybris* law, and claiming that it did obviously apply to a man who hired a youth for commercial sex,¹²² Aeschines comments:

Perhaps someone, hearing this for the first time, will be amazed that this phrase is included in the law of *hybris*, referring to ‘slaves’. If you think about this question, men of Athens, you will realize that this is the best provision of all in the law. The lawgiver was not concerned on behalf of the slaves (*oiketai*); it was because he wanted to accustom you to keep well away from *hybris* against free people that he added the provision penalizing *hybris* even against slaves. In general his view was that in a democracy the man who is a *hybristes* against anyone else at all was not a fit person to share in citizenship.

Aeschines thus chose to develop, and put more strongly, the argument, found also in Platonic form in the *Laus*, that the overwhelming need was to protect the free population in a democracy from any type of *hybris*. His reason for emphasizing this motive, rather than recognizing the Athenians’ concern for the humanity of their slaves, is surely, as Dover suggested,¹²³ designed to encourage the jury to react more strongly against Timarkhos. He wishes them to conclude, first, that if Timarkhos did engage in commercial sex when under age (something he will assert, but not seek to prove, 1. 39), he was engaged—as a willing, passive, participant—in acts of *hybris*; and second, and more importantly, that Timarkhos’ subsequent alleged acts of voluntary subjection to ‘slavish’ acts with other men, in order to be kept by them and to finance his own debauched pleasures, should be considered both as acts of *hybris* against himself (108, 185), and as collusion with the *hybris* of other men (29, 188). Hence, on the argument that *all* acts of *hybris*, committed against anyone (even oneself), must be repressed by the law, Aeschines hopes to encourage the jury to feel that Timarkhos is condemned of *hybris*.¹²⁴

Demosthenes, in his speech against his allegedly violent, arrogant and hybristic enemy Meidias, develops the *topos* in more varied and interesting ways. First, he employs, naturally enough, a most forthright version of the usual argument that there is no offence more intolerable than *hybris*, nothing more worthy of the citizens’ anger, none that more obviously involves the public interest, and that therefore the law dealing with it ‘should not consider who exactly the victim is, but the nature of the act committed’; hence it ‘should not be permitted even against a slave, or against anyone else’ (21.46). Demosthenes’ prime strategy is to portray Meidias as an inveterate and incorrigible *hybristes*, as likely to attack or disenfranchise ordinary, poor citizens like Straton (21.83ff.) as other members of the political elite like Demosthenes; throughout the speech he appeals to the self-interest of the supposedly united collective of ordinary citizens, an appeal which involves constant, disingenuous, but not wholly consistent, evading of the obvious differences between his own wealth, position and influence, and those of the poor citizens.¹²⁵ Hence he makes great play with the argument that the prime purpose of including slaves in the law was further to protect poor citizens from the dangers of *hybris*.

But he goes further. After quoting the full text of the law, he goes on:

You hear, men of Athens, the humanity (*philanthropia*) of the law, which does not authorize *hybris* to be committed even against slaves. Well, good heavens! If one were to take this law to the barbarians, from whom our slaves (*andrapoda*, literally man-footed creatures)¹²⁶ are brought to Greece, and were to praise

you, describe the city and say to them that ‘there are some people in Greece so civilized (*bemeroi*) and humane (*philanthropoi*) in their manners that though they have been often wronged by you and there is naturally in them an inherited hostility towards you, even so in the case of those people, for whom they have paid the price and acquired as slaves, they do not think it right to treat them with *hybris*, but have publicly established a law to prevent it, and they have before now punished many offenders against this law with death’; if the barbarians were to hear and understand this, do you not think they would officially appoint all of you to be their representatives (*proxenoi*) in Greece? So then, you have this law, which not only has a high reputation among the Greeks, but is thought to be excellent also among the barbarians; think then what would be an appropriate penalty for the offender against it to pay.

(21.48–50)

This argument plays interestingly with a number of our themes. In the first place, it falls into the common pattern of praise-*topoi* designed to compliment the Athenians on their excellent laws and values, which provide examples to other peoples, and to encourage them to implement them by punishing the current defendant.¹²⁷ It thus seeks to solidify the bond of common identity between prosecutor and jury, and win their favour by proclaiming (however absurdly) the international reputation of their laws. As I have observed at the start, Demosthenes does not even imply any difficulty with the idea that *hybris* against slaves is conceivable, but instead he compliments the Athenians on prohibiting it by a tough law in addition to the general force of public opinion. He employs the themes of barbarization and revenge which we have been elaborating to emphasize the remarkable humane generosity of his people; even though slaves are now all of barbarian origin, and mostly from areas to the east of Greece from which the great invasions came, still they receive this astonishing degree of protection.

Thus Demosthenes attributes to his people the ideal of treating their slaves with civilized *philanthropia*. There is no need to deny the presence as an Athenian ideal of a genuine, if superficial and complacent, concern to protect the limited honour and humanity of their slaves, even though they deserve their slavery both as barbarians and because of the Persians’ hybriatic aggression. Garlan seems to seek to do this, first, by seeing in the *hybris*-law essentially a concern to avert divine hostility; but there is, as I have demonstrated, little if any concern to connect the law with the supposed, and in fact hugely exaggerated, link between *hybris* and the gods.¹²⁸ Second, Garlan claims that the virtue of *philanthropia* attributed here to the Athenians is ‘a kind of commiseration which can develop only on the periphery of justice, within the framework of liberty not encompassed by law’.¹²⁹ This seems odd, since Demosthenes is explicitly describing the alleged purpose and actual practices of a law. Garlan may perhaps be suggesting an unconscious and subversive appropriateness in the choice of word, implying that actually the law did not work to protect slaves. But the hypothesis is unnecessary. While *philanthropia* may often be the extra-legal virtue of the merciful monarchs or gods, it stands frequently in the patriotic praise of Demosthenes and the other patriotic orators for the spirit embodied in the laws and practices of Athens; they are regularly claimed to be democratic, gentle (*praon*) and

humane (*philanthropon*), in contrast to the laws found in an oligarchy (e.g. Dem. 22.51; 24.24, 163).¹³⁰

Demosthenes' claim is indeed then that the Athenians chose to extend to slaves legal protection against the evils of *hybris* out of genuinely humane sentiment towards the feelings of honour in these inferior beings, in addition to the citizens' consideration for their own protection. The claim is reinforced by the extreme statement that 'many' have been executed for *hybris* against slaves. If there is any truth at all (which there probably is not) underlying this statement, it may be that Demosthenes is thinking of a case or two where abuse of another citizen's sexual favourite or trusted agent, perhaps of disputed legal status, led to some sort of legal action (such as the case of the Rhodian lyre-player and other cases discussed above). Fundamentally, though, this is a complacent and unrealistic claim, designed to flatter the jury with their rare humanity. It is possible to speculate that constant reiteration of such claims in public may have had some small effect in modifying slightly the actual behaviour of slave masters or others when angry with, or aroused by, their own or other people's slaves. But one cannot believe that the law was actually used to protect slaves with any frequency, if ever.¹³¹

This argument fully reflects of course the general moral complacency of the Greeks, confident in their superiority to the barbarians. The way it is developed on this occasion combines a staggeringly patronizing insensitivity (especially in the idea that Persians and others would flock to make Athenians all their *proxenoi* if they were to hear and understand the nature of Athenian protection given to their enslaved kinfolk) with a heavy-handed humour in the idea of inviting the barbarians to pass a judgement on the excellence of Athenian laws, if they can understand them.¹³² The argument reflects also the belief, which we find also, though expressed with venomous disapproval, by the Old Oligarch and Plato, that the Athenian democracy allowed many slaves—and especially, no doubt, the *choris oikountes* and other privileged and relatively independent urban slaves—considerable freedom and protection from violent chastisement.¹³³ The Athenians thus believed, perhaps with some justice, that some, at least, of their slaves were more honoured, and had their honour better protected, than in all or most other Greek cities. There may even be here, as I have suggested elsewhere, an implicit comparison with the Spartan helots, in the light of the discussions about the nature of Sparta's helot problems provoked by the liberation of the Messenians.¹³⁴ Thus, in particular, Athenians may well have relished the claim, however exaggerated, that they treated their enemy barbarian slaves with rare humanity, in contrast to their former adversaries the Spartans, who had treated their Greek helots for so long with persistent *hybris* and brutality.

The introduction, and the maintenance, of the protection offered to slaves under the *hybris* law then provides some evidence for important aspects of citizens' and slave-owners' ideologies in Athens. It is testimony to the persistence of the belief that *hybris* was a serious threat to the honour of the citizens and the stability of the society, both when it was beginning to impose legal controls on the aristocracy, and when it had moved with fair success towards citizen democracy and the rule of law. It is also continued testimony to the multiple contradictions of slavery. While some laws—both Solonian and no doubt later ones—treated slaves as property or as wholly

inferior beings, the *hybris*-law demanded that some attention be paid to the limited degree of humanity, honour and capacity for good action which slaves could be held to possess. The law was first passed in Solon's time, when many slaves were still Greek, but when Solon was also greatly concerned to strengthen and solidify the boundaries between free and non-free; the importance, and the paradoxical nature, of the provision was emphasized perhaps even more in the classical period, when slaves were regarded perhaps with more contempt as barbarians, yet when some few, at least, had increased chances of interesting work and the (often dubious) rewards of freedom. I would argue that the 'humanity' claimed, and apparently shown, in the law protecting slaves, as in the household-management literature, was not totally false, worthless or without any beneficial effects on the behaviour of the slave-owners or the rest of the free population in Athens. But it is hard to believe that this provision in the law was actually used in the courts to any significant extent, and there were other ideological reasons for its preservation and its public trumpeting. So in that sense it is right to recognize here as well a classic case of 'tokenism within the framework of slavery'.¹³⁵

NOTES

- 1 Cf. e.g. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* 79ff., Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* 99, de Ste. Croix, *Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* e.g. 140ff., Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 201ff.
- 2 On such contradictions in the slave-systems in the USA, cf. e.g. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll* 49, H.G.Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Oxford, 1976) 356, Parish, *Slavery* 1ff., 12 and *passim*. For the ancient world, e.g. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* 96ff., Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 146ff. In all systems: Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* esp. 74ff., Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* 32ff. and *passim*.
- 3 Fisher, *Hybris*, and other recent literature cited there, 1–5.
- 4 Cf. my criticisms of these views, Fisher, *Hybris*, *passim*.
- 5 Cf. e.g. Hes. *Works and Days* 238ff., Solon, fr. 4 (West), Theognis 39ff., Aesch. *Eum.* 510ff.
- 6 In Aristotle's account, the standard case of *hybris* involves the agent's deriving great and gratuitous pleasure in the forceful assertion of superiority over the victim; where the agent is an agreed inferior, asserting a claim approximating to equality, this element is naturally less likely to be present.
- 7 Cf. my discussion of these and other passages, Fisher, *Hybris* 117–18.
- 8 Cf. Mactoux, *Douleia* 91–2.
- 9 Cf. the treatment of such ideas in Vogt, *Slavery and the Ideal of Man*, and the criticism in Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* ch. 3.
- 10 The phrase was J.Barrington Moore's, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston and London, 1966) 132 n. 47, quoted by Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* 96.
- 11 On the authenticity of this text, and the details of the law, cf. most recently MacDowell's edition of the *Meidias* ad loc., and my *Hybris* 36ff.
- 12 Cf. on this phrase Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* 54, 147; O.Murray, in *NOMOS* 140; Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* 86–8 and n. 52.

- 13 Gernet, *Recherches sur le développement de la pensée juridique et morale en Grece* 183–97: this line has been followed by others, most recently M.Gagarin, ‘The Athenian law against *hybris*’, *Arctouros: Hellenic Studies presented to B.M.W.Knox* 229–36.
- 14 Harrison, *The Law of Athens* I 172.
- 15 Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* 86–8, and esp. n. 52. More generally, it may be said that throughout his stimulating work Patterson, with his focus on the degradations of slavery, pays too little attention to the desperate struggles of slaves to gain some recognition of personal status from their masters or from each other while still slaves; cf. Davis, *On Homicide and Slavery* 215–17.
- 16 Aeschines 1.18, Dem. 21.47–9, on which see pp. 71–4; and also two cases quoted or referred to by Athenaeus 266e–267a, Hypereides *Against Mantis* fr. 37 (Loeb) and Lycurgus, *Against Lykophron*.
- 17 Cf. Morrow, ‘The murder of slaves in Attic law’, CP 32 (1937), 216, *Plato’s Law of Slavery* 39.
- 18 Cf. e.g. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, A.Snodgrass, ‘A historical Homeric society?’, JHS 92 (1972), 114–25, B.Quiller, ‘The dynamics of the Homeric society’, SO 56 (1981), 109ff., I.Morris, ‘The use and abuse of Homer’, CA 5 (1986), 81ff., and the most recent, and perhaps the most persuasive attempt to distinguish elements of poetic invention or fantasy, successful (or archaizing) records of earlier ages, and late Dark Age social and political patterns, van Wees, *Status Warriors*.
- 19 Cf. e.g. K.Reinhardt, *Tradition und Geist* (Göttingen, 1960), 5f.; J.Griffin, *Homer* (Oxford, 1980) 46f.
- 20 For this view, cf. e.g. Lencman, *Die Sklaverei im Mykenischen und Homerischen Griechenland* III, Finley, *World of Odysseus*, Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen*, van Wees, *Status Warriors* esp. 41ff.
- 21 See W.Beringer, ‘Die ursprüngliche Bedeutung von *doulosynen anechesthai* in *Odyssee* 22.423’, *Athenaeum* 38 (1960), 65–97, and other articles, some of which are cited below.
- 22 On Syrie as an imaginary island, functioning like Ithaca as a meeting place of different trade-routes, cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 135.
- 23 This phrase suggests that Odysseus would have treated him with the consideration and affection appropriate to a *philos* or a full member of the household. The adverb *endykeos* in Homer regularly commends appropriately kind and careful treatment of guests (e.g. *Od.* 7.256, 15.543), of a suppliant (*Il.* 24.158, 187), of those one is escorting (*Il.* 24.438, *Od.* 14.337) or incorporation and careful upbringing in the household (*Il.* 23.90). Even where it is supposed to mean ‘eagerly’ or ‘ravenously’ (*Od.* 14.109, of Odysseus eating in Eumaios’ house: so Hoekstra in the *Oxford Commentary*), it may suggest rather the proper appreciation one should give to a meal prepared by a host. On this ‘generous’ practice of rewarding loyal slaves with property and a wife, cf. van Wees, *Status Warriors* 49.
- 24 Cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 163, 201, and van Wees, *Status Warriors* 234, 400, on slave-purchases and prices in Homer, and 71 with n. 24, on masters honouring favoured slaves.
- 25 Cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 191ff.
- 26 Cf. also Fisher, *Hybris* 170f.
- 27 Cf. the analyses of B.Fenik, *Studies in the Odyssey* 172ff.
- 28 On the severity of the punishment reflecting their offences as low-class rebels, cf. also van Wees, *Status Warriors* 130.

- 29 Cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 132.
- 30 Cf. Gschnitzer, *Studien zur Griechischen Terminologie der Sklaverei* II 10f. As he points out, the alternative MS reading *doulosynes* (the genitive) would have the same meaning with *anechestbai*, and may be preferable.
- 31 See above all Beringer, 'Die ursprüngliche Bedeutung', *Athenaeum* 38 (1960), 65–97, and also *Historia* 10 (1961), 274ff., *Historia* 31 (1982), 13–32, and 'Freedom, family and citizenship in early Greece', in Eadie and Ober (eds), *The Craft of the Historian* 41ff. The reading *apechestbai* has now appeared in a Ptolemaic papyrus text, cf. Heubeck, in the Oxford Commentary ad loc., who, like Morris, *Burial and Ancient Society* (Cambridge, 1987), 178, follows Beringer's line. This view holds that in *Il.* 3.409, and *Od.* 4.12, the feminine noun *doule*, which in both cases refers to a woman in a sexual relationship with a hero, but not a wife, *means* (slave)-concubine; but it may just as easily in both cases be serving to emphasize the servile status of the woman in such a relationship—in *Il.* 3.409, Helen's extraordinary challenge to Aphrodite to become Paris' wife or *doule*, the humiliating implications of the word *doule* are especially clear (cf. e.g. O.Taplin, *Homeric Soundings* (Oxford, 1992), 100f.).
- 32 Beringer's view is rightly criticised by Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 132, Gschnitzer, *Studien zur Griechischen Terminologie der Sklaverei* II 10f., Lencman, *Die Sklaverei im Mykenischen und Homerischen Griechenland* 253, and Nordheiler, in the *Lexikon der frühgriechischen Epen* s.v. *doulosyne*, who offers a parallel for the disputed phrase in the sense 'endure slavery', *Il.* 24.518; cf. also Hdt. 1.168f.
- 33 Cf. e.g. Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought* 379. It was taken so by Thomas Jefferson, in justification of his more specific view that many slaves (not only black slaves) might on enslavement change their 'ideas of right and wrong about the laws of property'; he also acknowledges that numerous slaves (like Eumaios) were examples of 'vigorous integrity'. (From his uneasy meditations on slavery and race, quoted in W.L.Rose (ed.), *A Documentary History of Slavery in North America*, New York, 1976, 73.)
- 34 As Garland seems to do, at least with the phrase 'the day of freedom': *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 31. Cf. Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* 55, though he overemphasizes the extent to which this process in Homer is seen essentially as affecting only women.
- 35 Cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 132f.
- 36 Elkins, *Slavery* 98ff. (though on his exaggerated picture of the permanent effects on slaves in the Americas, cf. e.g. the discussion and references in Davis, *From Homicide to Slavery* 192ff.); on the ritual processes of natal alienation and incorporation, see above all Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* ch.2.
- 37 Cf. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford, 1960), 83 and n. 28, Beringer, *Historia* 31 (1982), 26, Voigt, in the *Lexikon der frühgriechischen Epen* s.v. *arete*, Russo in the Oxford Commentary ad loc.
- 38 Beringer, 'Servile status', 25, 29f. Later, rather confusingly, he seems to suggest that the *doulion emar* is the time which such people subsequently have as slaves.
- 39 Cf. the view that there are differentiated *aretai* of men, women, children and slaves, discussed e.g. in Plato, *Meno* 70–4, and endorsed by Aristotle, *Pol.* 1259b18–1260a34.
- 40 On the importance of this speech for the poem's values and conflicts, cf. e.g. J.Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad* (Chicago, 1975), 99ff., M.W.Edwards,

- Homer: Poet of the Iliad* (Baltimore, 1987), 149ff., S.L.Schein, *The Mortal Hero* (Berkeley, 1984), 67ff., O.Taplin, *Homeric Soundings*, 122–4, 165–7.
- 41 Patterson seems to miss this implied shift in the *arete* demanded when he complains that Eumaios here lacks a real sense of men's freedom, as he complains only that the slaves are not willing to do their duties: *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* 52.
 - 42 Pointed out e.g. by A.W.H.Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* 83 n. 2.
 - 43 Cf. also Garland, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 30ff.
 - 44 The passage is repeated at 20.315–19. Cf. Heubeck ad loc., and for other cases of violent dragging about, cf. e.g. 18.99f., 21.299f.
 - 45 The fullest and best account of the slave-advice literature is Klees, *Herren und Sklaven*: on Xenophon, see pp. 64–97. M.Caster, 'Sur l'Economie de Xenophon', *Mélanges offerts à A.M.Desrousseaux* (Paris, 1937), 49–57 usefully emphasizes the attention throughout the work to the skill of leadership needed, according to the author, by kings, army commanders and householders alike.
 - 46 Most, rightly, take this to refer to agricultural slaves (e.g. Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 71, 89); R.Osborne, *Demos: The Discovery of Classical Attica* (Cambridge, 1985), 144 suggests that the emphasis on shared work excludes a reference to slaves, and uses the passages as part of his (otherwise plausible) case for shared labour between Athenian peasant-farmers. But he takes no account of the passage as a whole, which offers a sustained comparison between slave agricultural workers and troops: see above all 5.16, where the emphasis is that slaves (*douloi*) do need hopes no less than free. Possible, but not very likely, is Wood's idea (*Peasant-Citizen and Slave* (London, 1988), 49) that here the slaves may only be a sub-category of the workers (*ergatai*).
 - 47 The tone, and hence the radicalism, of this phrase is hard to pin down. Is Ischomachos presented perhaps as going, humorously, rather over the top in his claim of the heights to which he elevates his trusty slaves? Or is Xenophon here genuinely ahead of his time (cf. Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 82). On the varied denotations of *kalos kagathos*, cf. de Ste. Croix, *Origins of the Peloponnesian War* 371ff., Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* 41–5. Ischomachos, it should be noted, says that he treats his trusty overseers as *kaloï kagathoi*; he does not actually call them 'gentlemen'. One might conceivably wonder whether there might be an implicit reference to manumission here, an incentive which is, perhaps oddly, not otherwise mentioned in the work; but it seems unlikely.
 - 48 Cf. Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 82–3 (and also Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* 122). Klees observes correctly how often in his various works Xenophon believes in 'honour' as the greatest incentive, and see especially *Hiero* 7, on *philotimia* as the criterion that distinguishes men from beasts, and indeed 'real men' (*andres*) from human beings (*anthropoi*).
 - 49 Cf. Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 88–93.
 - 50 Cf. for the details, Morrow, *Plato's Law of Slavery* 57ff., Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* 334ff. More generally, on the important place of slavery in Plato's thought and on the need for hierarchy and the rule of reason, cf. Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* 147–63.
 - 51 Cf. Vidal-Naquet, *The Black Hunter* 170ff., Ducat, *Les Hilotes* 83ff. on Plato's part in the fourth-century debates.
 - 52 Cf. on the problem of Homeric citations in Plato, J.Labarbe, *L'Homère de Platon* (Liège, 1949), S.Bernadete, *Phronesis* 8 (1963), 173ff.
 - 53 On these alterations, see above all Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der*

- Homerischen Epen* 231ff. For the importance of god as the justifier and guide of law and all social institutions in the *Laws*, cf. above all 713a–718a, with e.g. J.Gould, *The Development of Plato's Ethics* (Cambridge, 1951), 96ff. For *doulion emar* as perhaps indicating the condition of slavery, cf. e.g. Eur. *Andr.* 99, *Hec.* 56, *Troad.* 1330.
- 54 Cf. Wickert-Micknat, *Unfreiheit im Zeitalter der Homerischen Epen* 236f.
- 55 Cf. also the criticisms of slave freedom in 'democracy' in *Rep.* 563b, and the Old Oligarch's complaints, [Xen.], *Ath. Pol.* 1.10, with Morrow, *Plato's Law of Slavery* 45f.
- 56 Plato is probably thinking here, in part at least, of the notorious Spartan harshness towards the helots; cf. also *Rep.* 549a, and see too, exclusively, Morrow, *Plato's Law of Slavery* 36, and Ducat, *Les Hilotes* 87; against, see the reservations of Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 161.
- 57 Cf. ps. Dem. 53.16, and Fisher, *Hybris* 39f.
- 58 Myron, *FGH* 106F2, Poseidonios, *FGH* 87F108, cf. Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 164f., and his further evidence.
- 59 *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (Harmondsworth, reprint 1982), 107–14, 121–2; and cf. the evidence collected e.g. in Genovese, *Roll, Jordan*, *Roll* 57ff., J.W.Blassingame, *The Slave Community* (Oxford, 1979), 262ff.
- 60 Fisher, *Hybris* ch. 12.
- 61 Morrow, *Plato's Law of Slavery* 43, Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* 345.
- 62 Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 165ff.
- 63 See Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* 270–6, Fisher, *Hybris* 481ff.
- 64 Cf. e.g. Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* ch. 12, Fisher, *Hybris* 483ff., Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought* 252f.
- 65 Penetrating recent discussions of Aristotle's arguments about slavery are N.D.Smith, 'Aristotle's theory of natural slavery', *Phoenix* 37 (1983), 109ff. and Brunt, *Studies in Greek History and Thought* ch. 11. On Aristotle's dig at Plato, cf. Morrow, *Plato's Law of Slavery* 44f.
- 66 Cf. above all Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 85, 96ff.; on the advantages of manumission to those setting slaves free, cf. also Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* 126ff., ch.3 *passim*.
- 67 Klees, *Herren und Sklaven* 91f.; for these and other justificatory pamphlets, cf. Faust, *The Ideology of Slavery*.
- 68 For comparative rates of manumission in different slave-systems, cf. Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death* ch. 10; on the laws in the different Southern states, cf. Tushnet, *The American Law of Slavery* 188ff.
- 69 See e.g. the detailed material and analyses in Genovese, *Roll, Jordan*, *Roll* 25–69, and Tushnet, *The American Law of Slavery*, *passim*.
- 70 For torture in Athenian courts, see G.Thur, *Beweisführung vor den Schwurgerichtshöfen Athens: die Proklesis zur Basanos* (Vienna, 1977), S.C.Todd, 'The purpose of evidence in Athenian courts', in *NOMOS* 33–6.
- 71 Hammond, Dew, and Harper: see *The Ideology of Slavery* 35ff., 78ff., 170ff.; Ruffin's judgement in State vs. Mann, fully quoted in Tushnet, *The American Law of Slavery* 61–3.
- 72 Cf. above all Solon's own words, in poem 4 (West); I have emphasized the first point above all in Fisher, *Hybris* 68–82; the second point, protection of the weaker members, is reasserted, and made (wrongly, I believe) the central purpose of the law, by Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code* 269–70. As Saunders notes, the identical wording in the law protecting widows, orphans and 'heiresses' (Dem. 43.75) is suggestive, but this seems insufficient to elevate this to be the central or prior purpose.

- 73 Morrow, 'Murder of slaves' 226, Murray in *NOMOS* 145, cf. also Fisher, *Hybris* 68. I am not myself wholly convinced by one of Murray's arguments for the Solonian date, that a law protecting citizens against aristocrats' attempts (especially in sympotic/komastic contexts) to dishonour them fits better an age like Solon's, engaged in the careful definition and distribution of rewards to a number of status-groups, than one like classical Athens, when the uses of the four Solonian status-groups have declined; as Murray himself shows, such 'aristocratic' behaviour remained a threat to the community in the time of Alcibiades or Meidias, and the need for democratic citizens to protect themselves would have found comparable legal expression then, had it not existed earlier. That *atimia* has developed more precise legal meanings does not mean that citizens ceased to feel the dishonour inflicted in a public fight; indeed in the full democracy poor citizens would in theory feel a loss of status the more keenly (cf. also Wilson, 'Demosthenes 21' 168f., Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* 289–92).
- 74 See e.g. T.W.Gallant, *BSA* 77 (1982), 111ff., Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* ch. 5, T.E.Rihll, *JHS* 111 (1991), 101ff., for a range of recent views on these issues.
- 75 Cf. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 37ff.
- 76 Murray, *Early Greece* 189–90, Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* 124ff.
- 77 Cf. also e.g. Andrewes, *Cambridge Ancient History*² III Pt.3 (Cambridge, 1982), 375ff.
- 78 Cf. Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* 144–56, Fisher, *Hybris* 76–82.
- 79 Whether he, or Draco, introduced the distinction between free persons and slaves into the homicide law remains uncertain; for Draco, cf. Morrow, 'The murder of slaves' 210ff., Mactoux, 'Lois de Solon sur les esclaves' 332f.; for Solon, cf. E.Grace, *Eirene* 11 (1973), 18, Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* 132.
- 80 Ruschenbusch, *Solonos Nomoi* fr. 74, Murray in *NOMOS* 144f., Mactoux, 'Lois de Solon sur les esclaves' 343ff.
- 81 Gaius, *Digest* 47.22.2.
- 82 For the process, e.g. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* 87ff., Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* 133, Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* 68ff. Doubts in T.E.Rihll, *JHS* 111 (1991), 101ff.
- 83 Cf. Manville, *Origins of Citizenship* 133ff., Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* 72ff.
- 84 Mactoux, 'Lois de Solon sur les esclaves' 336ff.
- 85 Murray, in *NOMOS* 144f.
- 86 See B.Fehr, in *Sympotica* 187ff.
- 87 Lysias 1.4, 25.
- 88 Cf. below, p. 71ff.
- 89 See Andocides 1.93 and MacDowell ad loc., for the law of Scamandrios of perhaps 510/9, and cf. Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of Athenian Democracy* (Oxford, 1969), 140f.
- 90 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*.
- 91 On this factor, cf. also the remarks of H.Baldry, in the discussions in *Greco et Barbares* (Fondation Hardt VIII, Geneva, 1962), 74ff.
- 92 Cf. in general G.E.R.Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge, 1979), 240–6.
- 93 On Scythian drinking, Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* 167–70, F.Lissarrague, *L'autre guerrier* (Paris, 1990), 146–9. For the vases, cf. Beazley, *Attic Vase Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* II (Boston, 1954), 56–61, J.Boardman and D.C.Kurtz 'Booners', *Greek Vases in the J.Paul Getty Museum* 3 (Malibu, 1986), 35–70; recent interpretations: F.Frontisi-Ducroux and F.Lissarrague, in Halperin, Winkler & Zeitlin

- (eds), *Before Sexuality* (Princeton, 1990) (Athenian symposiasts playing ambiguously with alternative lifestyles); S.D.Price, *GRBS* 31 (1990), 133–75 (satire of eastern and tyrannical luxury under the young democracy); L.Kurke, *Cl Ant* 11 (1992), 97–9, M.C.Miller, *JHS* 112 (1992), 91–105 (less complicated celebrations of eastern *babrosyne*).
- 94 Cf. M.F.Vos, *Scythian Archers in Archaic Attic Vase Painting* (Groningen, 1963); Lissarrague, *L'autre Guerrier*.
- 95 Cf. on these 'archers', Jacob, *Les esclaves publics à Athènes* 53–78, Hall, *Philologus* 133 (1989), 38–74.
- 96 Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 58ff.
- 97 Cf. also Patterson, *Freedom in the Making of Western Culture* 82ff.
- 98 Meiggs/Lewis, *Greek Historical Inscriptions* no. 12=C.Fornara, *Translated Documents: Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War* no. 35. Cf. also Hdt. 7. 135, 8. 102.
- 99 Cf. Gschnitzer, *Studien zur griechischen Terminologie der Sklaverei* I 1287ff. An early use of political *douleia* which the Greeks fought to avoid: Anakreon fr. 419 (Page).
- 100 Cf. e.g. Dem. 21, 49, discussed below.
- 101 W.Backhaus, *Hist.* 25 (1976) 170ff., J.Jouanna, *Ktema* 6 (1981), 3–15, Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 173.
- 102 See Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus*, J.M.Redfield, *CPh* 80 (1985), 97ff., and on women, M.Rossellini and S.Said, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* 3, 8 (1978), 949ff. For tragedy, see now above all Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian*, though she perhaps slightly underplays the extent of thoroughgoing criticisms and reversals of these stereotypes, as of the stereotypes of natural slaves, especially in some of Euripides' Trojan plays.
- 103 See Isocr. 4.150ff., where the Persian empire is presented as soft and ripe for conquest, and the Persians as even apter for slavery than Greek slaves here, and their grandees are hybriistic to their inferiors, and cowering flatterers to the King; Plato, esp. *Rep.* 435e–436a (a more nuanced view in *Statesman* 262c–e) and Aristotle (*Pol.* 1285a1–24, 1327b 18–33): discussions in Vlastos, *Platonic Studies* 140–63, Schlaifer, in Finley, *Slavery in Classical Antiquity* 93–132, briefly in Fisher, *Slavery in Classical Greece* ch. 7.
- 104 Cf. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 211–22, J.Barnes, *Polis* 7 (1987), 2–5 (on a new fragment radically modifying our view of Antiphon's *On Truth*), G.Cambiano, 'Aristotle and the anonymous opponents of slavery', in (Finley, ed.) *Classical Slavery* (London, 1987), 22–41.
- 105 Cf. e.g. Parish *Slavery* 9.
- 106 E.Perotti, *Actes du colloque 1972 sur l'esclavage* (Besançon, 1974), 47–56, Jacob, *Les esclaves publics à Athènes*.
- 107 L.Gernet, *Droit et société dans la Grèce ancienne* (Paris, 1955), 159–64.
- 108 See e.g. Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 73ff. The Old Oligarch (1.10–2) comments explicitly on the difficulty in distinguishing slaves and free poor by their appearance.
- 109 See e.g. MacDowell, *The Law in Classical Athens* 81–3, D.Whitehead, *The Ideology of the Athenian Metic* (Cambridge, 1977), 16–17, 109–16, Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 42, 146ff.
- 110 Cf. Jacob, *Les esclaves publics à Athènes* 147–9.
- 111 Cf. MacDowell, *G&R* 23 (1976) 29, Fisher, *Hybris* 39–40, 66, also Cohen, *PEP* 133 (1991), 193; the public nature of the alleged offence would also be a factor intensifying the offence.

- 112 Cf. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* 206f., MacDowell, *Demosthenes, Against Meidias* 15, Fisher, *Hybris* 38–9, 107, 118.
- 113 E.g. Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 69ff., K.Raaflaub, *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 227ff.
- 114 See my analyses in *Hybris* 225ff., 257ff., 352ff.
- 115 Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* 118–19, Cartledge, in *CRUX: Essays Presented to G.E.M.de Ste. Croix* 25.
- 116 Cf. Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* 331ff.
- 117 Cf. some evidence cited in Fisher, *Hybris* 502ff.
- 118 Cf. Dem. 9.28–31, 21.149–50, Aesch. 3.172, with Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* 85–6, Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian* 177.
- 119 Cf. Fisher, *Hybris* 505.
- 120 For these laws, cf. MacDowell, *The Law in Classical Athens* 122ff., 148, 149ff.
- 121 On the case and the law, cf. the recent discussions in Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* Part II, Winkler, *The Constraints of Desire* 54ff., Cohen, *Law, Sexuality and Society* ch. 7, among many others.
- 122 The strength of this point may depend on how young one is to suppose the youth to be, cf. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* 34ff., Cohen, *P&P* 117 (1987), 3ff., *Law, Sexuality and Society* 178ff., and Fisher, *Hybris* 42.
- 123 Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* 38.
- 124 On the legitimacy of this argument, cf. the contrasting views of Hindley and Cohen, *P&P* 133 (1991), 171 and 192–3.
- 125 Cf. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* 208ff., and above all Wilson, ‘Demosthenes 21’.
- 126 Cf. D.Harvey, in (Archer, ed.) *Slavery and other Forms of Unfree Labour* (London, 1988), 42ff.
- 127 Cf. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* 165, 299ff.
- 128 Fisher, *Slavery in Ancient Greece* 41; against such an idea, my *Hybris passim*.
- 129 *Slavery in Ancient Greece*, 151.
- 130 Cf. de Romilly, *La douceur dans la pensée grecque* 106–9.
- 131 Cf. MacDowell, *G&R* 23 (1976), 29.
- 132 Cf. on this also Wilson, ‘Demosthenes 21’ 168.
- 133 Cf. also Dem. 9.3, and ps. Xen., *Ath. Pol.* 1.10, *Pl. Rep.* 562ff., and also cf. e.g. de Romilly, *La douceur dans la pensée grecque* 109–10.
- 134 Cf. references in n. 51 above, and my article in *The Shadow of Sparta* (ed. A.Powell and S.Hodkinson, London and New York, 1994) 361. The Old Oligarch, of course, seems to be explicitly expressing his preference for Spartan practices whereby any Spartiate may discipline any helot, and it is easy to tell helots from free men (1.10–2).
- 135 I am most grateful to Paul Cartledge, Niall McKeown and other participants at the Cambridge seminar where an earlier version of this chapter was read, and to Anton Powell and Hans van Wees for valuable comments on this later version.

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NON-ARISTOCRATIC ELEMENTS IN ARCHAIC POETRY



Alan Griffiths

‘**W**hat kind of a speech is this that has got out through the fence of your teeth?’ This famous standard line from Homer perhaps originated in, and will certainly serve to exemplify, the concern which Greeks of the early historical period felt for the proprieties of speech, and for the dangers associated with boasting, talking out of turn, laying claim to more than your place in the social hierarchy entitled you to. Familiar myths reinforced the message by pointing to the divine punishment ruthlessly handed down to Salmoneus, Niobe and the daughters of Proitos, who (mis)used their tongues to challenge the privileges of the gods. The impulse to speak out against one’s ‘betters’—that, freedom of speech, on which the institution of Athenian democracy based itself—must, on the earlier view, be ‘bitten back’.

An early scene in the *Iliad* (2.190ff.) forces the point home in a deliberately paradigmatic way. An incautious speech by Agamemnon triggers a mad stampede by the Akhaian army back to the ships, to set sail for home; only with difficulty does Odysseus succeed in exerting his powers of persuasion to stem the rush. First he appeals to the nobles: ‘Now look here, it is not right for you to be afraid, like some coward-commoner (*κακός*); sit down yourself, and seat the other troops.’ But to any ‘man of the people’ (*ἀνὴρ δήμου*) he found still ‘yelling’, his approach was different: ‘Now look here, sit down quietly, and pay attention to the talk of others, those who are better than you, while you are no warrior, and have no strength; in warfare, and in policy, you just don’t count.’

Shut up, be quiet, listen, obey; the role assigned by the poem to those soldiers outside the charmed circle of noble warriors, the *ἀγαθοί*, is to act as anonymous extras on the set of war, *κωφὰ πρόσωπα*, non-speaking characters. And the troops duly fall silent. But (and here comes the cautionary tale), on this one occasion there is an exception. This time one of the dumb extras dares (his ‘speaking name’ is Thersites, ‘Dan Dare’) to raise his voice against the generals (212ff.). The helpful authorial voice is quick to steer us towards a correct evaluation of his unwonted irruption onto the scene. Thersites is *ἀμετροεπής*, ‘speech-unlimited’, and ‘his mind was full of ideas unordered (*ἄχοσμα*)’.¹ As is usual in the Homeric scheme of things, externals mirror and reveal the hidden moral state: ‘he was the ugliest man at Troy;² bandy-legged, lame limper, knobbly shoulders hunched down on his chest, head misshapen, topped with skimpy tufts.’ Conversely, *against* the normal scheme of things, the poet denies him the dignity of a pedigree. He would not have been able

to give a proper answer to the question which Homeric nobles employ, after a decent interval has elapsed, to enquire after the status of a visitor: ‘Where is your *polis*, and your parents?’³ He is of no account. No wonder then that Odysseus, with our full approval, abuses him for his upstart intervention, threatens to strip him naked and reveal his ‘shame’⁴ if he dares to open his mouth again, and reinforces the message by belabouring him with the very staff that confers the right to speech in the Achaian assembly.⁵ Thersites is reduced to terror, tears and silence; and in a wickedly targeted concluding stroke, the poet underlines the restoration of normality by describing the acquiescence of the common soldiers in the shaming of their fellow with the routine introductory line ὧδε δέ τις εἵπεσκεν ἰδὼν ἐς πλησίον ἄλλον, ‘And this is what each man was saying as he turned to his neighbour’ (271). There *are* circumstances under which it is permissible for the rank and file to record a view; the conditions are that utterances should be unattributable, and should not call into question the decisions of their superiors. We have come full circle; Odysseus’ quelling of the mutinous ‘men of the people’ leaves only Thersites still rebellious, but then he too is put down, and the one ordinary soldier who dared to assert his right to an individual voice is absorbed back into the anonymous mass.

Thersites is a kind of cultural ‘scapegoat’,⁶ whose exemplary humiliation ensures that never again in the *Iliad* will the exclusive discourse of the nobles be so rudely interrupted.⁷ Physical violence and verbal ridicule combine to make it absolutely clear to Homer’s audience, as well as to any would-be imitators inside the poem, that there will be no place in what follows for the common man or his culture. The *Iliad* dedicates itself to the celebration, indeed very probably the effective creation, of an ideology for aristocrats. Its very length is an index of the leisured lifestyle of those who were able to enjoy it. And such was the power and coherence of the imaginary world it conjured up that it succeeded, for centuries, in establishing itself as a normative model for upper-class aspiration, and in dominating the Greek educational agenda. The ambition that drives its characters—and thence, vicariously, its consumers—is ‘always to excel, and to be pre-eminent over the others’ (αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν, καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων; 6.208=11.784, instructions given by their fathers to Glaukos and Achilles respectively). ‘Ἀρετή’, ‘excellence’, ‘valour’, is the name of the game. It is the goal that still drives Pindar’s clients (*Ol.* 2.86–8) to soar as eagles above the croaking, earthbound ravens two hundred years later—and beyond.

But the privileges enjoyed by those at the peak of the social pyramid are also precarious. If their position is to be maintained and justified, as the Lykian commander Sarpedon reminds his comrade Glaukos in a famous passage (*Il.* 12.310ff.), this superiority must be repeatedly and successfully demonstrated in practice. If the warrior dies in combat his infant heir, now left unprotected in this selfish snakes-and-ladders society, is at risk of slipping down to a life of beggary and contempt, a fate that Andromache foresees for her baby Astyanax (*Il.* 22.484–505). Still worse, if the whole group of defenders were to fail their community, there looms the prospect of captivity, slavery and forced concubinage for the women. To be suddenly cast down from the enjoyment of riches, power and (above all) respect is the ultimate horror.

It follows that this supremacist ideal is bound to spurn the culture of the ordinary folk, and to try to insulate the shimmering epic world from grubby reality. The *Iliad*

poet is the first great self-censor. Feasts of roast beef displace the fish, onions and garlic of everyday life; writing and iron-working are ignored;⁸ examples of magic, monstrosity, heroic impropriety and heroic invulnerability are all suppressed.⁹ Nothing must be allowed to disturb the delicately constructed image of high perfection.

Here is a quite different type of poem, also attributed to Homer:

‘WELL NOW, YOU POTTERS—IF you will give me payment for my song, then: “Hither Athene, stretch a guardian hand above the kiln!”—may all your cups and all your pots turn nicely black, and be well toasted, and fetch all they’re worth, selling like hot cakes in the market and the streets, and may they make much profit †and bring you what you want†. BUT IF you should make false and cheating promises, then I shall conjure up the kiln-concussing sprites, Smasher, along with Crasher, and Can’t-Hold-Me¹⁰ and Shaker-To-Bits, and Beat-’Em-Up-Raw, who causes this craft so much trouble: “Stand by the porch¹¹ and the mansion, and make the kiln fall into total confusion, as the pots¹² all shriek out aloud! And as a horse’s jawbone grinds, so may the kiln grind down to powder all the pots inside itself!” And hither too Sun’s daughter, Drug-queen Kirke!—come, pour savage potions, pound them and all their works! And hither Cheiron bring his Centaur hordes (both those that Herakles didn’t kill, and those he did)¹³ to strike this workshop cruelly, bring the kiln tumbling down! And they themselves, the potters, how they’ll groan! (but I’ll be happy watching those demonic tricks!) —and if one tries to peep in, may his stupid face be scorched, so one and all they’ll learn “to do the right”.’

‘The Kiln’ (Κάμνος), or ‘The Potters’ (Κεραμῆες), as this little piece is named by our sources, may perhaps date to the late sixth century—the end of the period under discussion. It is cast in the same epic metre as the *Iliad*. Of course it is not really a poem of Homer’s, but it found a place in one of the ancient fictional ‘Lives’ of the poet, a prose work, and that, luckily for us, ensured its survival.¹⁴ Its exuberant vigour comes as a breath of fresh air after the Iliadic hothouse which, however splendid the growths it produces, remains an artificial environment. Here, by contrast, we find a representation of a real world in which eagerness to enjoy a good recitation is offset by a canny reluctance to shell out hard-earned obols. We sense the anxiety of the potter as he loads up his kiln, crossing his fingers that the stacked vases won’t collapse, that the temperature has been accurately judged. We glimpse a world of magic, and energetic cursing, swirling with unseen demons. This is not to suggest, of course, that ‘Crasher’, ‘Smasher’ and their ilk were hobgoblins drawn directly from popular superstition: they are clearly *ad hoc* creations of the poet, the product of a bubbling Rabelaisian, or Aristophanic, invention. But they do have roots in real belief. Homer’s Olympians may have palaces in heaven, and (by the sixth century) marble temples on the acropolis;

but were the chickens in the back yard to start coughing, it would no doubt be some more homely spirit of Chickencough to whom their owner would turn for help. We know from hints and scraps of evidence that this was the world inhabited by most ancient Greeks.¹⁵ Why do we know so little about it?

First, we have no chance of recovering material of this kind unless it happened to precipitate out of the ephemeral flux of daily life to be fixed in the—at least potentially—permanent form of written texts. And who would bother to record a spell, a work-song, a joke, a folktale?¹⁶ It is not that literacy was confined to the educated classes, for—in sharp contrast to the arcane syllabary of the Mycenaean known as Linear B, knowledge of which must have been confined to a small scribal cadre—the alphabetic script adopted by the Greeks in the mid-eighth century was easily learnt, and caught on rapidly; besides the thousands of inscribed pots we have, for example, a few traders' letters incised on strips of lead.¹⁷ Rather, the singers of folk-songs and the like simply did not feel it necessary to record them, for they were essentially oral phenomena with no canonically fixed form; who cared whether successive generations chose to repeat them, modify them, or forget them? At first, the only extended compositions to be written down are formally versified hexameter epics.¹⁸ In the course of the seventh and sixth centuries the range of genres which it was felt appropriate to transcribe steadily widens, extending to lyric, elegiac and iambic poetry; but with the exception of a few 'philosophical' treatises (Anaximandros; Herakleitos?), prose forms remain unwritten until the end of the archaic period.¹⁹

A second important factor which ensured that only upper-class genres and values were perpetuated in written form is the 'improving' role which Greek culture ascribed to poetry. We can trace this best in the fifth and fourth centuries. The one thing that Aeschylus and Euripides are agreed upon, in their agonistic confrontation in Aristophanes' *Frogs* (830ff.), is that it is the poet's duty to teach the citizens to distinguish right from wrong, to enlighten them about eternal truths and advise them on contemporary political dilemmas. Plato too emphasizes the educational power, for good or evil, of literary culture (*Republic* Book 2, 376e to 3, 398b). Xenophanes' complaint, at the end of the sixth century, that the gods of Homer and Hesiod are made to behave in just those selfish and immoral ways that humans are told to avoid, serves only to highlight the paideutic burden that the epics were called upon to bear. A scrap from Aristophanes' lost play *Banqueters* provides us with a brief snapshot of an upper-class youth undergoing his Homeric lessons, and the easy familiarity with epic language shown by all the archaic poets, from Sappho to Simonides, shows that this kind of instruction must have been widespread and general.²⁰ And even if a more widely representative, less 'elevated' body of written poems had survived down to the classical period, they would certainly have failed to pass through the secondary filters of the Hellenistic and Byzantine educational systems, which preserved only 'good models' (moral or stylistic) for the edification of their pupils.

So the aristocratic code remained in unchallenged possession of the field throughout the archaic age.²¹ The more existing class structures come under pressure, the more poetic forces are deployed to reinforce them. Alkaios, enmeshed in power struggles on Lesbos around 600BC, attempts to tar his opponent Pittakos with the always-

handy epithet ‘lowborn’ (*κακοπατρίδας*); far from embodying the prowess of the epic lion, the ideal exemplar of heroism, he is cast as ‘the shift fox’, an animal which Homer never deigns to mention, but of which we shall soon hear more.²² Theognis, comfortably if lugubriously ensconced in his armchair in his gentlemen’s club in Megara half a century later, is positively paranoid about the emerging mercantile classes, and again resorts to animal imagery:

Kyros, our city’s still the same; its people, though, are different:
the ones who used to have no concept of our laws or rules,
but wrapped their ribs around with goatskin cloaks,
and lived like deer outside the city walls,
it’s *they* who are the masters now, while those who once were fine
are cowards now. Oh, who can bear the sight?
(53–8)

Against the cowardly deer Theognis sets the epic lion, symbol of domination, but the old charm now lacks conviction:

Seizing the fawn from its mother, a lion exulting in strength
gripping it tightly, I then...could not drink down its blood.
(949f.)

Not even the lion feasts always on meat, even the lion,
for all his great might, is gripped by helplessness.
(293f.)

Animals also supply an image to express the poet’s fear of contamination by marriage:

When looking out for rams or donkeys, Kyros, or for horses
of good stock, you want them to be bred
from noble sires; yet nowadays no gentle *man* thinks twice
to wed a gutter-snipe’s gutter-child, if money’s there.
(183ff.)

The verses are elegiac in more than one sense. Theognis is lamenting the passing of old certainties, hardly even hoping any longer to shore up the fabric of the landowners’ society.

The same anxieties about social instability surface again in Anakreon, during his time at the court of Polykrates, dictator of Samos in the 520s. There is other evidence that the ‘tyrant’ Polykrates was eager to adopt the postures more appropriate to inherited than self-won power, perhaps precisely because his own blood was less than blue. But Anakreon can afford to be more stylish than the hag-ridden Megarian reactionary, and the vulnerability is overlaid with confident satire:

Once he wore a turban tightly wrapped around his lousy head,
wooden ear-rings dangling under, and a dirty leather shawl
flapping around his dirty ribs;

Re-cut rag from a cast-off shield-skirt. Once he lived with bakers' drabs,
lived with whores from alley-corners—that was Artemon's lifestyle,
hollow, flashy, sham and dud.

In those days his neck was often sandwiched in the public stocks,
leather lashes stripped his skin off, all his hair was rooted out,
people pulled his beard away—

Now he rides in stately splendour, golden rings his ears adorn,
he—the son of Kyke!—twirls an ivory parasol up aloft,
just like any Lady Muck!

(fr. 388 Page, 82 Gentili)

These songs, accompanied by lyre or pipe, were destined for performance at the *symposion*—the formal drinking-party which developed to become the focus of the social life of male aristocrats, or those with aristocratic pretensions, during the later archaic period.²³ It was the symposion which also provided a platform for the celebration, in Ibykos and Anakreon, of homosexual passions engendered by the cult of the youthful body—itself the outcome of another aristocratic obsession, that of the Panhellenic games, in which military competitiveness was at least partially displaced into the sphere of athletics. Yet though these composers put their talents at the disposal of the ruling class, and supported its values, the very fact that *parvenus* are held up to scorn and ridicule is a telling index of their increasing importance as the old structures were eroded. Other 'new' features which make their appearance in these poems are important for a different reason. Symposion-songs, because they are bound by a less rigid code of 'what is appropriate' than the epics, admit a wider range of popular material. Both Alkaïos and Theognis, perhaps because they are addressing an audience which fancies itself as sophisticated and able to interpret allusive material which would remain impenetrable to less well-educated enemies, present political comment in the form of riddles (γρίφοι): Alkaïos presents the state as a ship labouring in heavy seas (fr. 326), while Theognis draws once again on horsey imagery:

I am a fine filly bred for the racecourse, but foul is the rider
whom I am forced to support; this is an anguish to me.
Many a time I have been on the point of snapping my bridle,
tossing the jockey aside, escaping to go my own way.

(257–60)

Such conceits²⁴ no doubt served to flatter the audience gathered in the *andron* with a sense of their inborn superiority, and to assuage the resentment they harboured against their jumped-up successors in power.

This is the point at which we should return to the ideological paradigm of this high-born culture, the Homeric epics. Perhaps because the ideals they proclaimed had then been under less pressure, the epics prove themselves to be markedly *more* open to a positive valuation of the life of the lower orders. At the centre of the *Odyssey* stands the king-as-hobo, the 'hero' whose ambivalent status we have already noted; and at his elbow we find, ranged in support against the greedy nobles, Philoitios the faithful cowman and Eumaios 'the noble swineherd'.²⁵ True, in the interests of formal propriety Eumaios is given a noble pedigree (he had been captured

by pirates as a child); but it is his essential moral nobility which really earns him his epithet *δῖος*. The patriotic pigman is not a figure whom Pindar could have held up for admiration; it is a compliment to the power of the *Odyssey* that its audience could be brought to swallow such an astonishing affirmation of liberal humanity. Nor, indeed, does the *Iliad* confine itself solely to heroic action. There is an important 'exception that proves the rule': the similes. In these very special situations the poet lowers his gaze, as it were, from his rapt contemplation of the spectacle of heroic endeavour, to meet the audience's eyes directly, and to acknowledge life as it is really lived—donkeys that have escaped from their tether, logs dragged down from the mountains by mule-team, a woman from the Anatolian mainland delicately painting an ivory decoration. The astringent touch of reality lends its strength to the body of the poem, and benefits in return by association with the world of heroes; a brilliantly effective system of mutual feedback by which fantasy gains credibility and humble activities are ennobled.

'The persona of the poet in any given archaic Greek poem is but a function of the traditions inherited by that form.' Gregory Nagy's dictum (Nagy 1990:71) is cast in too dogmatic a form (if it were literally the case, how could anything new ever have been attempted?), but it does express a general truth. And what is true of the poet's 'I-statements' is also true of his material, as has already been briefly mentioned. What is appropriate to epic, or the epico-lyric amalgam of Stesikhoros in the mid-sixth century, is different from what is appropriate to elegy, or iambos. We must make constant allowance for the generic type of the poetry under consideration: just as themes appear for the first time in Arkhilokhos, say, not because Arkhilokhos was the first to give them poetic expression but because Arkhilokhos was the earliest poet of that type to be thought worthy of written record, so we should not look for 'non-aristocratic elements' in texts whose very nature excluded them. Context is all. Was a poem recited in the *megaron*, the great hall of a great lord, or in a rich man's *andron*? In the *agora*, the central piazza of the township? In the blacksmith's forge (Hesiod, *Works and Days* 493)? By the fireside? Each of these locations has its proper mode. And who is addressed, who excluded (men, women, slaves, children)?

Posing such questions also helps us to focus on just what it is we are looking for. Some elements that have already emerged are: the representation of life as it is actually lived (e.g. food, work, material culture); non-Olympian religious beliefs, including magic and superstition; riddles;²⁶ and a liberal use of animal imagery to express ideas about human society. Other candidates suggest themselves—the work-songs of men reaping the corn²⁷ and threshing the grain, or women grinding it into meal (PMG 869); proverbs, fables and folktales; children's games, slaves' joking repartee. These are all categories of popular culture which were embraced with enthusiasm in the Hellenistic period.²⁸ We can get some way by retrejecting information from the genially open-minded, culturally receptive fifth-century writer Herodotus, whose *Historiai* ('Enquiries') are a mine of oral lore. Vase-painting, too, is much less inhibited than formal literature in its choice of material for illustration, admitting into its repertoire, for example, padded dancers, olive harvesters, sculptors, potters and other artisans at their work. But what notice does archaic *literature* allow itself to take of these phenomena?

We have already seen that the question of development through time is actually less important than that of literary *genre*. One might be tempted, incautiously, to construct a picture of gradual, if unsteady, progression from the *Iliad* towards Athenian democracy, a process in which the voices of the sub-culture make themselves more and more insistently heard through the braying of the aristocracy. But this is not the case. Features which only managed to half-insinuate themselves into the elegiac tradition are allowed full play, from an early date, in a different kind of poetry, the *iambos*. This more boisterous poetic mode admits obscenity, satire, sexual adventuring and many other examples of the popular material we have been looking for. Its roots lie in a kind of performance much less 'elevated' than epic or lyric, as is clear from its metrical form, which alternates heavy syllables with only a single light one (rather than the paired light syllables of the dactylic epic and its related metres) and is thus closer to the rhythms of ordinary speech—as Aristotle noted (*Poet.* 1449a). In fact iambic poetry evolved as a kind of implicit riposte to the epic; indeed, its 'epodic' variant pits dactylic and iambic rhythms (and their metrically embedded linguistic expressions) against each other within the same poem, harnessing them into an uneasy alliance which actually serves to underline their mutual opposition.²⁹ Take, for example, the following epode by Arkhilokhos, his longest surviving piece.³⁰ At the point where the papyrus begins a young girl is speaking; she has been intercepted by the narrator, perhaps while on her way to the well to draw water. Each couplet consists of a dactylic length (half an epic line) sandwiched between two iambic cola:

'...keeping yourself well away. I'll hold myself in check as well.
But if you're desperate, if your passion just can't wait,
Someone at home where I live is simply dying to get wed:
A lovely, tender girl—I think, for what it's worth,
Beautiful, flawlessly fair. So she's the one you want to see.'
So much for her words; I in turn replied and said:
'Daughter of Amphimedo, that noble and intelligent
Old lady, now in earth's damp dark embrace,
Many enjoyments of love exist for hot young men like me,
Besides the Sacramental; one of those will do.
Details can wait for a while; when darkness spreads [across the sky
God willing, we'll discuss them, you and I.
I'll do whatever you say— I'll stop myself well short of home,
Below the archway, right outside the entrance hall.
Don't grudge this favour, my love; I'll hold my rearing horses at
The grassy garden's gate. But as for Neoboule—Oh,
Some other man can have *her*. She's twice your age, a rotten fruit,
Now all that bloom of youth is faded, dulled,
All her attractiveness gone. She can't contain her vanity,
She's shown her nature now, the crazy bitch—
Damn her and blast her to hell! Please God, don't let it be my fate
To have to keep at home a wife like that—
Neighbours would laugh me to shame! It's you, not her, I'm after, dear;
You're not a faithless, two-faced prostitute,

Not like that hatchet-faced cow, with lovers swarming round like flies.
But now I'm scared I'll come before my time,
(Being too much in a rush) like puppies born proverbially blind.'
So much for speaking; then I laid the girl
Down in the daisy-strewn grass and wrapped her in my fleecy coat
To keep her warm, her neck held cradled in my arms,
Trembling all over with fear, like some fawn panicked by the hunt;
And roving-handed gently stroked her breasts
Where you could see the new growth of teenage flesh just swelling out;
And fondling all her gorgeous body's length
Shot off my leaping white bolt, just touching tawny hair, no more.

The epic phrases acquire a provocatively ironic flavour in their new context of seductive groping. The girl remains *intacta*, but the heroic formulae are subtly deflowered; the poem's subversive cockiness rubs itself off onto Homer. Another quatrain by Arkhilokhos (fr. 114 W) throws the rivalry between epic and iambic values into even sharper relief, challenging head-on the classic image of the tall Homeric hero:

Not for me the six-foot general, strutting round on lanky legs,
Fondling his fancy hair-do, stroking his close-shaven chin—
Let me have a shortarsed leader, one with bandy legs astride,
One with both feet firmly anchored, full of guts and full of fight.

Diomedes is unceremoniously sacked (not much more than half a century after the composition of the *Iliad*) to make way for a commander who has more than a passing physical resemblance to Thersites. And to complete this demolition of the heroic image, Arkhilokhos is even prepared to construct a persona who brags of abandoning his shield in a battle with the Thracians in order to save his own skin (fr. 5 W).

The same picture emerges from Arkhilokhos' use of the fable. One of his poems presented an *ainos*³¹ about an eagle and a vixen who struck up a friendship and moved in together, upstairs and downstairs in an oak tree (frs. 172–81 W). One day, while the fox was away, the eagle treacherously seized her cubs to feed her own fledglings; the distraught fox, unable to reach the nest, could do nothing beyond pleading for vengeance to Zeus, 'You who take notice of violence and fair dealing among the beasts' (!). Eventually, the President of the Immortals sees to it that Justice is done. The eagle, in stealing the gods' portion from a sacrifice, accidentally snatches up a still-smouldering twig along with the meat; when she returns to her brood the nest catches fire, and the eaglets, done to a turn, fall sizzling into the jaws of the vixen waiting below. Revenge is sweet; and this is the revenge, barely encoded, of the helpless proletarian fox—the animal shut out of Homer, denied possessions, living by its wits—on the aristocratic eagle. The traditional hierarchy of the animal kingdom is here inverted, as Arkhilokhos casts the despised figure of the fox as hero, and puts it centre-stage; the 'base, mean folk' (δεῖλοι) triumph over the nobles, from whom they were regularly forced to suffer continual arrogant injustice without the possibility of effective recourse to law.³² In real life, Thersites is repeatedly

beaten down into submission; in imaginative verse, he could at the very least fantasize that a higher power might make things come right in the long run, and perhaps even that injustice would be swept away by political change.

During this period the centre of cultural gravity was still located towards the east of the Greek world, and Arkhilokhos the islander from Paros found a satiric successor in Hipponax of Ephesos. Hipponax, writing in the same iambic vein, adopted a similar persona:

But as for me, Wealth is so blind,
he's never turned up at my door and said
'Hipponax, this here silver's all for you
with more to come.' He's such a dope.

(fr. 36 W)

Only scanty fragments remain to help us understand why Kallimakhos later took him as a model; but a long and entertaining piece of iambic writing does survive from another archaic writer, Semonides of Amorgos (also an islander). Once again animals are pressed into service to characterize human types; this time the target is Woman, in all her infinite variety. They come in different styles, says Semonides, because God made them after different models; that's why we find ourselves lumbered with the Sow, the Mare, the Bitch, and so on. One type, the toiling Bee-wife, is grudgingly allowed to be virtuous—if only to throw the others into relief.³³ A sample:³⁴

Another sort He fashioned from the stubborn ASS;
when absolutely forced, with blows and oaths,
she finally accepts her tasks and then performs
a reasonable job. But all the while she chews,
chews in the back room, chews by the stove,
chews all day and chews in the night-time too.
She's just as greedy when it comes to sex—
all comers are made welcome, any hour.

Then there's the POLECAT-woman, miserable wretch;
there's nothing good or charming about *her*;
no pleasure, no delight, and no allure.
In bed she plays the typhoon-tossed destroyer,
pitching and rolling till her partner's quite sea-sick.³⁵
She causes havoc stealing from her neighbour's house
and gobbles up left-overs from the sacrifice.

The intended audience may not have been aristocratic, but it was pretty clearly male. This strain of misogyny runs deep in archaic literature; the story of Pandora, the Greek Eve, is given a prominent place in both of Hesiod's poems. Women are often treated almost as a separate species, a necessary but barely tolerated race of alien *Gastarbeiter* in a man's world. It is sometimes difficult to remember that this society also produced the heroines of the Homeric poems, in which Andromache, Penelope and Nausikaa are idealized and even Helen is treated sympathetically as a victim. Again, it is considerations of genre which determine the appropriate perspective.

But we do not have to wait for Arkhilokhos, let alone the stirrings of democracy, to see popular material begin to claim a foothold in recorded poetry. I have left till last the surprising fact that at the turn of the eighth and seventh centuries, contemporary (as near as makes no difference) with the *Iliad*, there stands another text which is complementary to the Homeric epics, and functions in some ways as their antipole—the *Works and Days*.³⁶ It is almost as if the world of the similes has been brought into the foreground, and the heroes have receded to occupy the subordinate place. ‘Homer for Spartiates,’ King Kleomenes I is supposed to have said, ‘and Hesiod for helots’ (Plut. *Spartan Sayings* 223a). There is a truth in this that goes beyond the trivial fact that smallholders and share-croppers could pick up handy tips from the poem—to fashion their plough-poles from elm or laurel, for example, because that is the timber most resistant to worm-infestation (435), or to reckon on a successful spring ploughing when, three days after the first cuckoo, rain fell to exactly the depth of an ox’s hoof, no more and no less (486–9). It is also a matter of social and political ideology.

Hesiod signalled his departure from the conventions of heroic epic at the very out-set of his earlier poem, the *Theogony*, when he asserted that the goddesses of poetry, usually thought of as resident on Mt Olympos, or on Parnassos above Apollo’s Delphi, had actually manifested themselves to him on his local mountain in Boiotia, Helikon. This bold declaration looks like a metaphor for the staking out of new poetic territory; its original effect—before it was eroded into a cliché—may have been something like Blake’s affirmation that unseen powers swarm about us as we pursue our daily activities in what are not seen, traditionally, as poetic locations (‘Hackney and Holloway sicken for Estrild & Ignoge’).

The *Works* embodies the fulfilment of this independent vision. It is not primarily concerned with the technicalities of farm maintenance (which are a subsidiary matter), but is a poem about Justice, about Hesiod’s vision of how human life ought to be conducted under the divine administration of Zeus; and, as such, it paves the way for the argument put forward by Arkhilokhos in his fable of the Eagle and the Fox. Indeed, there is a close parallel to that story in the *Works* (202ff.):

And now I’ll tell a parable to the barons, who know it well already.
These are the words of the hawk to the glossy-throated nightingale,
clasped in his talons, and carried aloft in the clouds;
she, as the crooked claws dug in, screamed piteously,
but the hawk, in all his power, said as follows:
‘Why squawk? You’re tight in the clutch of your superior,
and you’ll go where *I* want, poet though you be;
it’s up to me whether I have you for dinner, or let you go.³⁷
Only a fool struggles against those more powerful than himself;
he can’t win, and all he does is to add pain to humiliation.’

Amazingly, this has been taken as an admission that Might is Right, and the weak must put up with it; a principle which would make nonsense of the whole argument of the poem. What Hesiod is doing here—apparently anticipating Matthew’s understanding of the use of parables by Jesus, that their point was to *conceal* the truth from the uninitiated (Matthew ch. 13)—is to tell the barons what they already know, *which is only half the story*. Of course Might wins in the short term; hawks

(which Plato also uses, along with wolves and kites, to symbolize brutal and thieving autocrats at *Phaedo* 82a3) can grab nightingales just as eagles can snatch up unguarded fox-cubs. No one needs to be told that. The point, as the continuation (213–24) makes clear, is that Zeus' justice will prevail in the end; if necessary, by visiting punishment on the offender's descendants.³⁸ The 'fable' may seem to end at v. 212, but its suppressed second half is there for those who can read it, transposed into a different mode.³⁹ In an *ainos* of this kind, the listeners have to contribute some mental work of their own if they are to grasp the point. Odysseus needed to make it clear to Eumaios that a poncho would be a welcome defence against the chilly night air, but it would have been impolite (and would have run the risk of humiliating refusal) if he had asked directly.⁴⁰

So what is Hesiod's business with the βασιλῆες to whom he addresses this little homily? The latter are 'princes', 'barons', rather than kings; they seem to be close relatives of the βασιλῆες who infest Odysseus' palace during his absence, paying suit to his wife Penelope.⁴¹ They are the property-owners of Boiotia, who when not owning property (or rather, while still owning property) take on the role of magistrates enforcing the rights of property. Hesiod has cast the *Works* in the form of an appeal for justice in a personal suit. The poet, supposedly, has been cheated by his brother Perses, who has grabbed more than his fair share of their father's bequest, leaving the poet (the 'nightingale' of the fable, the 'singer') to complain to the local Bench. The whole scenario is probably fictional, a means of lending a sense of urgency and vividness to what would otherwise be an abstract moral tract; for what judge would be persuaded to look more kindly on the poet's case by hearing himself described as 'bribe-guzzling' (39, 221, 264), or what brother would be more inclined to reach an amicable settlement, or (for that matter) to keep his plough in good working order, for being addressed as 'Perses, you great idiot' (286, 397, 633)?

The *Works*, then, falls into the same category as the Near Eastern compositions known as 'wisdom literature', like the story of Ahiqar (also dressed up in dramatic story form), *Ecclesiastes* (in Hebrew Qoheleth, 'The Preacher') and the Book of Proverbs. It is a passionate plea for justice for the powerless peasants, tactfully disguised as autobiography in order to make it more acceptable to the audience it wished to influence. Its roots are anchored deep in the soil which serfs and hired labourers dug for their noble masters, the Boiotian equivalents of Glaukos and Sarpedon who were 'honoured with thrones, and steaks, and brim-full cups' for defending their communities in battle. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that it is full of the kind of popular material—proverbs, 'magic', riddles—that we have noted, more thinly scattered, in other poets of the succeeding period. Three examples may serve to demonstrate the point.

First, we may round off our survey of the uses of animals in archaic poetry by singling out a particularly Hesiodic feature, the substitution in the *Works* of familiar names by 'kennings'. These are periphrases of the type 'furry-foot' or 'cringer' for the hare;⁴² they later become something of a poetic affectation (e.g. ἀνθεμουργός, 'flower-worker', for the bee at Aesch. *Persians* 612), and even in Hesiod the phenomenon seems partly explicable as an exploitation of popular delight in riddles; 'day-sleepers' for thieves (605), and 'tripod' for the old man with his stick (533), for example, look

like improvisatory nonce-words.⁴³ But these expressions were ultimately rooted in popular superstition.⁴⁴ Names have a dangerous power, and to name a predator may conjure it up; conversely, there is no surer way for a hunter to come home hungry and empty-handed than inadvertently to utter the proper name of the animal he is tracking.⁴⁵ Hesiod's animals reflect the familiar reality of the surrounding world, populated by deer (ὕληκοῖται, 'woodbedders', 529) and snail (φερέουικος, 'Portakabin', 571) rather than the heroic lion (whose very existence in Greece in the historical period is doubtful). But if we ask why his 'agricultural handbook' offers no instructions on managing the sheep which Hesiod himself claims to have been herding when the Muses met him, the answer is simply that he is not a farmer but a poet, who is here demonstrating his talents by discoursing on the World of Work, as he had earlier versified the Descent of the Gods;⁴⁶ he need not feel bound to cover everything.

Another area of significant divergence from the Homeric model is that of religion. The *Theogony* sets out what was later to become a canonical picture of the origins and roles of the Olympian gods.⁴⁷ Even here, though, Hesiod's emphasis seems eccentric, for he assigns quite unusual importance in the pantheon to Hekate, as if he had some personal devotion to her cult and wished to take the opportunity to proselytise (411–52). In the *Works*, the Olympian consortium is completely overshadowed by its chief, Zeus, who is presented as omnipotent, a Greek Yahweh. It is Zeus in whom Hesiod reposes all his trust that the universe is, despite appearances, ultimately a properly ordered place; and this is the picture shared by the Aisopic tradition, too. Zeus at one end of the spectrum; and at the other, his terrestrial agents:

Barons, you too must pay regard to the Justice of which I speak;
for Immortals are close among us humans, looking out
for those who grind each other down with crooked laws,
with no care whatsoever for respect of the gods;
thirty thousand are they on the face of the nourishing earth,
immortals, Zeus' guardians of mortal men;
they supervise all judgments and all wicked works,
insensible to sight, criss-crossing the whole world.

(248–55)

These recording angels, who were earlier identified with the spirits of the Silver Race (122ff.), have no place in the Homeric scheme of things,⁴⁸ but we may be sure that a belief in their existence brought some consolation to ordinary Greeks over many centuries, for they resurface in later, less strait-laced texts.⁴⁹ For life's victims, the hope of Justice must inevitably be postponed.

Finally, and continuing on this note of depression, there is Hesiod's view of history. Homer blocks out consideration of the present in order to concentrate on the great age of heroic achievement; and though the *Iliad* shows itself acutely aware of the tragedy of human life cut short in battle, its own *raison d'être* resides in a belief that posthumous κλέος, fame and glory, somehow justifies the sacrifice. The great shield which Hephaistos makes for Achilles in Book 18, chased with intricate scenes of human activity, is evenhanded in its recognition that life is compounded of violence and delight; but it is significant that the opening, closing and central vignettes

are devoted to celebration (marriage, harvest, the dance). The *Iliad* poet was ultimately a life-affirmer, and his successors as writers-in-residence at the courts of the rich and powerful managed to sustain this vision. But Hesiod, in touch with the grim realities of peasant life, sees things quite differently. The Heroic Age is too central a feature of Greek tradition for him to ignore entirely, but when he comes to set out his own version of past and present, in his famous survey of the Races of Mankind (*Works* 106–201), the Heroes represent no more than a temporary upward blip on a graph of unremitting decline, a process by which humanity has been falling further and further away from a golden age of peace and plenty. In the sequence of metals which he inherited from an Eastern source, Gold led to Silver, Silver to Bronze, and Bronze (after a pause for ‘the heroes, who are called demigods’) to Iron; an Iron Age which still has some time to run, in which it will plumb new depths of corruption and hopelessness. This is a convincing *mimesis* of the voice of the farmer throughout the ages, right down to *Cold Comfort Farm* and the age of the withdrawn agricultural subsidy. But it was not a voice which was encouraged to make itself heard within earshot of magnates like Peisistratos or Polykrates, busy polishing their images as latter-day heroes, planning the grandiose public works by which they hoped to win immortal *κλέος*.

A popular game among *aficionados* of ancient literature is to draw up priority-lists of works which one might hope to recover, some day, from tombs or Egyptian rubbish-dumps. Complete books of Sappho, or Kallimachos?⁵⁰ Or perhaps Simonides’ victory odes? These would make tempting morsels; but their rediscovery would only serve to bulk out a body of material that is already well-represented, that of the poetry composed by and for a highly literate and sophisticated upper class. Our appreciation of the full band-width of early Greek literary culture would be better served by a transcript of the songs sung at a harvest festival in, say, Sikyon in the mid-seventh century; or, failing such an impossible demand, an extensive papyrus of Arkhilokhos, or a copy of the *Margites*. As it is, we have to be grateful that at least some clues to the thoughts, desires and sense of humour of those Greeks whom Theognis regarded as ‘beyond the pale’ managed to survive the process of selective recording and transmission which aimed to preserve only ‘the best’. It is hard to suppress popular culture entirely. Icebergs are too big, and too buoyant, to be pushed right under.

NOTES

- 1 The negative adjectives are reinforced by Odysseus’ insult ἀκριτόμυθε, ‘jumblespeaker’ (246).
- 2 Contrast Kuanippos, the handsomest Greek on the expedition: Ibykos fr. 282, 36ff. P.
- 3 Later sources abhor the vacuum, and make him ‘the so of Wildman’ (Ἄγριος), an Aitolian—and brother of Diomedes’ grandfather Oineus; but see the reasonable objection of the bT Scholia on v. 212 (‘If he’d been a kinsman of Diomedes, Odysseus wouldn’t have beaten him up; he only assaulted the common folk, τοὺς ἰδιώτας’). Two further vignettes from his *Nachleben*: in Arktinos’ lost epic the *Aithiopsis* he was killed by Achilles after sneering at the hero’s passion for the Amazon Penthesileia

- (see Proklos' summary of the poem, Homer OCT vol. 5, p. 105, and Frazer on Apollodoros *epit.* 5.1); and Polygnotos' great mural at Delphi showed him dicing with Odysseus' bitter enemy Palamedes (Pausanias 10.31, 1).
- 4 αἰδῶς here refers to the man's genitals, which will be exposed to public view, but it is also the word for that quality which Thersites so notoriously lacks: knowing when to lower one's eyes in the face of a person of higher status.
 - 5 How appropriate that it should be precisely Odysseus to enforce the lesson of proper behaviour: Odysseus the beggar-king, the draft-dodger, the archer who tips his arrows with poison (*Odyssey* 1.260ff.), the warrior who crawled through the drains to get into Troy (Sophokles fr. 338 N²). His own character and actions confuse and subvert the conventional parameters of the heroic ethos.
 - 6 So Thalmann 1988. For other recent discussions of Thersites see Nagy 1979:259ff. and Postlethwaite 1988 in the appended bibliography; cf. too Donlan 1973:151f.
 - 7 Though he is a unique figure, it is interesting to see that some of his characteristics are shared by Dolon (whose name suggests 'Deceitful ambush'), the Trojan spy in Book 10. Dolon is also 'vile of feature' (εἶδος μὲν ἔην κακός, 316), and collapses into gibbering terror when confronted by Diomedes (374–6, 390). Like other victims of the social put-down we shall meet, he is defined by his animal-skin dress (the wolf's pelt and ferret-skin cap, 334f.). His father Eumedes is wealthy (315, 378ff.), but his profession of herald excludes him from the warrior elite. Dolon's motivation for volunteering for the dangerous mission when the 'heroes' remain silent, the carrot which Hektor dangles before him, is the promise of Achilles' chariot and team (*when* they are captured). So if Thersites is the common man who must be thrust back down into silence, is Dolon a paradigm of the *nouveau riche* who now seeks the aristocratic status that a fine war-chariot will confer?
 - 8 As so often in Homer, there are famous exceptions; here, 6.168ff. (an arch reference to writing-tablets) and 23.826ff. (though I believe the latter passage to be part of a later interpolation).
 - 9 Magic: no mention of the fateful log which was Meleagros' external soul in Book 9; and though the horse of Achilles finds a voice and prophesies to him at the end of Book 19 (another exception!), he is quickly silenced 'by a Fury' for breaking so dramatically the normal rules of Homeric discourse. Monstrosity: no mention of the fact that the centaur Cheiron had been a famous four-legged friend of Achilles. Impropriety: no mention of the crime (his attempted *Himmelfahrt*) which caused Bellerophon's punishment at 6.200–3. Invulnerability: no mention of Achilles' heel, or Ajax' armpit. All these were standard features of pre- and post-Homeric epic; see the fundamental article by Jasper Griffin (Griffin 1977).
 - 10 Reading Ἄσχετον ('ἈσβολονMSS)
 - 11 Reading οἴητε παρ' αἰθουσαν for the variously corrupt transmitted text.
 - 12 'Potters' MSS.
 - 13 An example of so-called polar expression, by which an element is lent emphasis by the 'illogical' mention of its opposite.
 - 14 *Vita Herodotea* 439ff. (Homer OCT vol. 5, p. 212f.); also ascribed to Hesiod, and edited as fr. 302 in Merkelbach & West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica* (Oxford 1967). There is a full scholarly discussion by M.J. Milne in an appendix to J.V. Noble, *The Techniques of Painted Attic Pottery* (2nd edn, London, 1988); I hope to devote a fuller treatment to it elsewhere.
 - 15 Later texts like Theophrastos' *Characters* and Pausanias' *Guide to Greece* are rich sources for popular religious practices such as the oiling of sacred stones or the consulting of 'wise women' like Ainesimbrotia in Alkman fr. 1,73. Despite the lapse of

- time between the archaic period and Pausanias, it is unlikely that there was much change in this *longue durée* ground bass.
- 16 Magical and religious texts form a special case. Curses are especially efficacious when inscribed on some medium, often lead, that can be buried beyond the reach of the intended victim. Thin sheets of gold, engraved with versified incantations and instructions to help devotees of mystic cults negotiate the transition to a hoped-for afterlife, accompanied their bodies into the grave; see Lloyd-Jones 1985. The earliest examples so far known, however, date to the fifth century.
 - 17 See Johnston 1990:464. The artist dubbed the Sappho Painter provides a nice vignette of the state of literacy in Athens at the end of the sixth century; he is among several black-figure vase-painters who, though formally illiterate, optimistically surround the figures on their pots with jumbled strings of letters, in the hope that their clientele will take them for meaningful name-labels. One wonders how many buyers passed on to the next stall with a wry smile.
 - 18 Indeed, there has recently been a revival of interest in the idea that the Semitic writing system was imported into Greece precisely in order to immortalize the Homeric poems; see most notably Barry Powell, *Homer and the Origin of the Greek Alphabet* (Cambridge, 1991).
 - 19 Contrast the situation in Egypt, where folk-tales like the splendid *Tale of Two Brothers* are committed to writing as early as the Nineteenth Dynasty (thirteenth century BC). In Greece, we have an archaic version of the universal tale of The Hero vs. The One-Eyed Giant only because it found poetic form in *Odyssey* Book 9; see D.L.Page, *The Homeric Odyssey* ch. 1. Other popular story-patterns can be traced because they were dramatized by fifth-century playwrights (e.g. the tale of Polyidos and Glaukos).
 - 20 Xenophanes fr.166 KRS, fr.11 DK; Ar. *Daitaleis* fr. 222 K, 28 Cassio, 233 PCG.
 - 21 Even in democratic Athens, later, where an oar-puller was notionally as good as a horseguard, and 'equal rights' (ἰσονομία) was the slogan of the constitution, nobles like Kimon, Pericles, Megakles and Kallias continued to exercise a tacit hegemony; and this had cultural as well as economic and political dimensions.
 - 22 'Lowborn'; fr. 348,1 LP, cf. 67,4; 75,12; 106,3. See Page 1955:169ff., 239. 'Fox'; fr.69,6f., Page 231f.
 - 23 There has been much interest in this institution in recent years: see Bowie 1986, Murray 1990. One detail: after Polykrates' downfall his chief minister, Maiandrios, arranged for the dedication at the Samian Heraion of the complete suite of (no doubt lavish) furnishings from the tyrant's dining-room (Hdt. 3.123,1).
 - 24 Compare the riddle of the hydria and amphora immediately following at 261–6.
 - 25 Theokritos, seeking to justify his own celebration of peasant virtues, picks up this feature in his important programmatic passage at 16.48–55: the expected ranking of epic characters is turned on its head, with Iliadic warriors dismissed in a couple of lines (and only the *losers*, and the handsomest, qualifying for mention), while all the emphasis is reserved for the *Odyssey*, climaxing in Eumaios, Philoitios and Laertes, the old king who withdrew into a rustic retirement to tend his vineyards.
 - 26 These seem to have had a particular association with marriage feasts: see Hesiod's poem on the wedding of Keux (fr. 266 MW), with Merkelbach and West 1965, and the riddle posed by Samson to the Philistines at Judges ch. 14. The 'Delphic' language ascribed to oracles is also closely related.

- 27 For the 'Lityerses song', see Gow on Theok. 10.41.
- 28 Particularly noteworthy here are Erinna's lament for Baukis, the 'Distaff' (D.L.Page, *Select Papyri III*, 487ff.; H.Lloyd-Jones and P.J.Parsons, *Supplementum Hellenisticum* no. 401), with its mention of the childhood game of *Tortoise* (for which cf. also *PMG* 876c; others at 875); Herodas' description of the rustic balancing contest (poem 8); and of course Theokritos and the other bucolic writers.
- 29 The same technique was used for parodic purposes in an early (sixth century?) 'spoof epic' called, after its unheroic hero, the *Margites*; runs of hexameters were interrupted by iambic 'interpolations'. *Margites* was a gormless yokel whose marital difficulties provided at least one of the poem's subjects; see Nagy 1979:259f. and Barron and Easterling 1985:109f. for a summary of what is known. West 1992 provides an up-to-date edition of the surviving fragments; see M.W.Haslam's review in *Bryn Mawr Classical Review* 4.2.14 (1993).
- 30 The 'Cologne Epode', first published in 1974, may be found in Page 1974 as text S 478; it will be fr. 196A in the second edition of West 1971.
- 31 'Story with an implied recommendation for action.' There is an early example in the crafty tale told by the disguised king at *Odyssey* 14.468ff.; Eumaios gets the point.
- 32 No wonder the poet seemed so threatening to Pindar, champion of the social status quo: 'I have the warning of Arkhilokhos before me, sniping in impotence, fattening himself on the heavy spite of hatred' (*Pyth.* 2.54ff.).
- 33 Civilization had not yet reached the stage where the cat was available as an icon of perfection.
- 34 Fr. 7,43–56 W; for commentary, see Lloyd-Jones 1975.
- 35 I have gone rather overboard with this image because I suspect that 'nausea' here is used in its literal sense, rather than as an indication of the polecat's stink. The energetic wrestling of sexual intercourse is often represented in Greek poetry as a rough voyage; see e.g. Alkaios fr. 306,14 col. ii, Arkhil. fr. 41 W, Dioskorides A.P. 5.54,3f.=*HE* 1499f. (cf. 1488) and, for Aristophanes, J.Taillardat, *Les images d'Aristophane* (Paris, 1965), 101f., §§179–84; cf. too the ubiquitous metaphor of 'bareback riding'.
- 36 More properly, the *Works*; it is generally admitted that much of the material at the end of the poem is the result of subsequent accretion, and my own belief is that Hesiod's original composition ended at v. 662, at the conclusion of a passage which has all the marks of the authorial *sphragis*, or 'signature'.
- 37 An example of 'polar expression'; see n. 13 above. The hawk means 'I'm having you for dinner.'
- 38 See Herodotus' story of Glaukos the Spartan at 6.86.
- 39 Compare the way in which Demodokos' song of the Sack of Troy in *Odyssey* 8 stops at v. 520, only for its terrible human consequences to be indirectly expressed in the simile at v. 523–30; a device of extraordinary sophistication.
- 40 See n. 31 above.
- 41 'There are many other βασιλῆες of the Achaians, young and old, in sea-girt Ithaka For the 'Lityerses song', see Gow on Theok. 10.41. (*Odyssey* 1.394f.).
- 42 δασύπους, πῶξ. The practice is widespread in other cultures, too: at 1 Sam. 25:22 and 34 (and elsewhere in Kings 1 and 2) David's threat to exterminate 'every mother's son' (RV and subsequent translations) is more vigorously expressed in the Hebrew as (AV) 'any that pisseth against the wall', i.e. male.

- 43 Some of the puzzles are not yet solved: is 'No-Hair' of fr. 204.129 MW the snake (Wilamowitz) or the maneless lioness (Morel)? No space here for full discussion of the identity of the 'Boneless One' (ἀνόστεος) of v. 524; I confine myself to an assertion that it is the bear.
- 44 And still are: Gavin Maxwell reported that Hebridean fishermen were 'as full of superstition as a dictionary is of words, and there is a long list of animals and objects that may not be mentioned aboard a fishing vessel, much less actually seen. Thus salmon were to Jackie "cold iron," the words themselves spoken hurriedly and with bated breath, pigs were "those grunting things," and rabbits—the most dangerous of all—"the furry longeared things"' (*Harpoon at a Venture*, London, 1952, 156). I am assured by M.P. Villemonteux that French fishermen share the Scottish abhorrence of the *lapin*; I suppose because those who commit their lives to fragile hulls do not like to think of hole-diggers. Does that explain the grunting things, too?
- 45 'The animal not to be named before breakfast' (Kallim, fr. 550) is however the ape.
- 46 And claims in a final flourish (if I am right about the end of the poem; see n. 36) that he could even, if required, provide a *Mediterranean Pilot* in hexameters.
- 47 See Herodotus 2.53,2, who brackets Homer and Hesiod together. The picture given by the *Theogony* may be more 'conventional' because the earlier poem was designed for an aristocratic audience—perhaps even the jury of Amphidamas' sons which awarded him first prize in the contest on the occasion of their father's funeral in Chalkis (*Works* 654ff.).
- 48 As always, there are odd exceptions (cf. n. 8 above); in this case, the personified 'Prayers' of *Iliad* 9.502ff.
- 49 E.g. Plato *Phaedrus* 259cd (the cicadas); the prologue of Plautus' *Rudens* (stars); cf. Eur. *Melanippe Desmotis* fr. 506 N², and the traces of a wistful belief in a personal *daimon*, or 'guardian angel': Plato *Phaedo* 107d6, Men. fr. 714 Kö. Less comforting δαίμονες are bogey-women like Mormo, Empousa, Lamia, etc.; and even when their purpose is to enforce the rules, old demons like the Erinyes remain awesomely terrifying.
- 50 Texts of both these authors seem to have survived until the West Christian assault on East Christian Byzantium in 1204, the infamous 'Fourth Crusade'.

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THE PLACE OF THE POET IN ARCHAIC SOCIETY



Rosalind Thomas

INTRODUCTION

We cannot properly understand archaic Greece without the poet. We encounter poetic activity at all levels of society, some of the most prominent archaic leaders left poetry and poetry forms our main contemporary literary evidence. The image of the archaic poets is, in their own words, one of wisdom and moral authority, deserving of a semi-religious awe: in one modern formulation, the period is the ‘lyric age of Greece’, in another, that of the ‘discovery of the individual’, characterizations which both focus on the lyric poets (in the widest sense of the term ‘lyric’). These poets celebrated individuals. In a famous fragment, the sixth-century poet Ibykos moves through a catalogue of heroes of the Trojan War who have been the subject of song, in order to set them aside, for his real theme is Polykrates, tyrant of Samos:

καὶ σύ, Πολύκρατες, κλέος ἄφθιτον ἐξεῖς
ὥς κατ’ αἰοδᾶν καὶ ἑμὸν κλέος.

For you, too, Polykrates, will have undying fame, both through song and my own fame.

(*Poetae Melici Graeci*, fr. 282, lines 47–8)

Reusing an Homeric phrase, ‘undying fame’, Ibykos echoes the Homeric pursuit of glory (*kleos*). It is a commonplace that poets of the archaic period confer fame, and the poets themselves are acutely aware of this. Poetry celebrated achievement, but achievement would not be truly great without the boon of poetry: hence *kleos* is used both of the fame itself and of the poetry that brings that fame, poetry itself has *kleos*.¹ It has indeed been suggested that all Greek literature originates in *kleos* and never quite breaks free from that beginning.² The Ibykos fragment thus encapsulates what is often seen as the central role of the poet in archaic society, the preservation and transmission of glory (though, as we shall see, this picture needs to be modified). The fragment also neatly underlines the arrogance of the poet, who flaunts his own fame, on whom Polykrates’ fame will rest.³ I begin with it because it also raises the question of the relationship between poet and patron, poetry in the service of its paymaster and the clear political role such poetry might perform.⁴

How characteristic was this? What was the place of the poet? How influential were poets in archaic Greek society? Was Ibykos right, or was poetry only the external gilding to a society which functioned largely without any input from the poets whose texts we happen to have? Perhaps it was an exclusively aristocratic phenomenon, or one much exaggerated for us by the vagaries of literary survival. Already in this fragment we can see a complexity in the relationship of poet and tyrant, perhaps a reference also to the poet in his role as conveyor of wisdom. What I want to do in this chapter is to explore some aspects of a highly complex question, which is the place of poets and poetry in archaic society (this I take to include Pindar; it will also be useful to look at Homer). It has been comparatively little discussed from the wider perspective of the history of archaic society.

There are, of course, difficulties, but they can be as illuminating in some respects as they are negative in others. Many lyric poets' work has barely survived at all, some of it may even have perished by the fifth century BC (e.g. Terpander). With the exception of Pindar, the surviving output of even the greatest is slight and fragmentary. Still more elusive is any information about individual poets' lives, or any influence particular poets may have had.⁵ Even in antiquity, for example, there was little agreement about whether the great choral poet Alkman came from Sparta or Lydia, and the fourth-century Athenian Lycurgus could claim Tyrtaios, famous for military verse in seventh-century Sparta, as an Athenian.⁶ Later ancient writers, starved of data, resorted to fantastic deductions from the verses themselves, in order to produce some semblance of a biography.

Yet it is this poetry which, almost alone, gives us contemporary literary data. Accounts of archaic history in later historians will have been overlaid by the interpretations of later generations and, if based on oral traditions, will have been inevitably altered by the needs, interests or boredom of narrators in the intervening periods. The verses of someone like Alkaios, however, may be tendentious, but at least they are contemporary and have the roughness and difficulty to be expected of real individuals and contemporary conflicts.

An unfortunate result is that a comparatively tiny number of poets have been made to bear a heavy burden of interpretation: Sappho, Alkaios, Arkhilokhos, Mimnermos, Tyrtaios, Solon, are easily taken to represent 'the spirit of the age'. In an influential thesis, for example, Snell argued that we see in Greek lyric the discovery of the individual, of individual emotions and personality which had been lacking in the thought world of Homer's audience or in the heroes they heard about.⁷ We are supposed to find a transition from 'communal oral poetry' to individualized lyric. This schema has been much criticized, and its interpretation of Homeric epic is demonstrably false,⁸ but it illustrates some important pitfalls for any discussion of the poet in the archaic period. Particularly relevant here, it is dangerous to take a very few outstanding individuals as representative of the whole age. It disregards all kinds of accidents of transmission as well as deliberate selection, and it takes Sappho's emotional lyric as somehow more characteristic and central to the society than other types of poetry less resonant for the modern world (e.g. choral hymns). The schema also creates a picture of neat linear development which can only mislead.

Arkhilokhos, for instance, who recorded highly personal outbursts and seems to criticize older ideals of military glory, is taken, temptingly, as the inventor of personal

lyric poetry. Yet there is little reason why he should not have had predecessors. A similarly ebullient poet around, say, 750 BC, may simply not have thought to write down his poetry. In a culture overwhelmingly preoccupied with oral communication and oral literature, it probably seemed surprising at first even to record the Homeric epics. Most scholars seem to agree that in a tradition of oral poetry from which ‘Homer’ emerged, it may have been the extraordinary quality of the monumental poet’s verse which prompted his contemporaries—or the poet himself—to preserve one version in writing (or, alternatively, writing enabled him to create a masterpiece). Against this, one can see why a proto-Arkhilokhos in the eighth century might not have thought it worth writing down an incidental song—and if he had, why it might have been lost.⁹

Differences of expression or tone may be as much connected to genre—epic, didactic, lyric—as to ‘the spirit of the age’. The personality of Hesiod is more prominent in his *Works and Days* than that of the epic poet in the *Iliad*, partly because *Works and Days* is a self-consciously didactic work.¹⁰ Schemes of linear development may thus sometimes be derived from an impression of succeeding genres of poetry which are simply unevenly preserved, or which happen to burst into prominence because they have been raised to new heights by a new master. I would, myself, therefore have the utmost doubts about the extent to which one can really trace any clear linear developments in this period: not because such developments did not occur, but because the literary evidence is so scanty.

Genre is also closely related to social, political and oral context in the archaic period. Scholars are increasingly inclined to stress the importance of audience and performance to the understanding of this early poetry.¹¹ Archaic poetry was created to be performed and heard; much of it was meant for quite specific, often ritual occasions, and most types of poetry were performed to music, thus were closer to song (see below). Even though written texts of the words might exist, then, these seem to have been regarded more as *aides-mémoires* than sufficient on their own. Throughout the ancient world, the texts we read silently were heard, read aloud or sung; but this is particularly true of the archaic period, with the additional factor that much poetic production was specifically tied to particular public, ritual or social occasions. This implies that the divisions of genre and metre so carefully detailed in the handbooks were probably initially related to occasion and type of performance: it was only later, perhaps by the end of the fifth century, certainly in the world of the Hellenistic scholars, that genre became detached from either.¹² Many of the obscurities of archaic poetry would have been quite absent for the original audiences, and it takes a leap of imagination to translate these often mutilated fragments into a plausible picture of a real society. Genre and context, however, are fundamental for our picture of the role of poetry in archaic Greece.

THE PLACE AND SETTING OF POETRY

If we stand aside for a moment from the distinctions of different metrical performances and genres, it can truly be said that poetry was to be found—and, more accurately, heard—everywhere in archaic society. An image of ‘The Lyric Age of Greece’ and of the lyric poet as being exclusively devoted to the expression of personal emotion

(Sappho, Alkaios) would give a misleading impression of poetic production isolated from any but the aristocratic (and sympotiac) class. Alkaios probably did compose for comparatively narrow circles of political peers, Sappho perhaps for a similarly small, though female, group (but her poetry does seem to have travelled widely and fast despite this). But if one looks beyond the charmed circle of the canon of lyric poets, poetry or song was performed in some form at perhaps most ritual occasions, public civic and religious occasions (e.g. festivals) and many private gatherings, formally and informally. Not all would have been of a high standard, much was probably never written down at all, or was improvised, very formulaic or repetitive, but it would beg the question to dismiss it as folk-song rather than poetry. How can we tell? It was certainly not confined to the aristocratic class alone. Herington's description of early Greece as a 'song culture' conveys this most vividly.¹³

This can be illustrated by looking at the range of poetry that is mentioned in the Homeric poems alone. This may seem paradoxical: Homeric society is often described as if its poetic features were exhausted by the figure of the Homeric bard singing of the deeds of heroes. Yet we find that the audience portrayed in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* which listened to the '*klea andron*', the great achievements of men, was in fact used to a wider range of song than heroic epic. This underlines the point above about the danger of defining a period by a single genre which happens to be represented (for us) for that period in an exquisite form of perfection. Homeric epic is also valuable here because it provides one of the few bird's-eye descriptions of a society or city so early: it can partially compensate for the fact that these songs would not have been preserved in writing. I take it that these descriptions would not have been entirely removed from the experiences of 'Homer's' own audience in perhaps the eighth or early seventh centuries.

The *aoidos*, or bard, is familiar. Obviously of professional interest to the Homeric poet, he is portrayed as singing songs of gods and heroes, the *klea andron*, accompanied by the lyre (*phorminx*), to the Homeric *basileus* in his hall. Phemios was the *aoidos* at Odysseus' palace in Ithaca,¹⁴ Demodokos the revered bard at the Phaiacian court of king Alkinoos. Our richest account of the bard is provided by Demodokos, especially in *Od.* 8.¹⁵ The mode of performance and subject matter were closely tied to the interests of the princely milieu. It would have been precisely these *basileis* who gained their prestige from tracing their families back to these Homeric heroes, and it has recently been suggested that it is they who would have had most incentive to propagate and indeed record the Homeric epics in order to reinforce their position.¹⁶

But it is less often noted that Demodokos also sings at a public festival in honour of Odysseus in what is presumably the agora, in an occasion strikingly reminiscent of later archaic practice (*Od.* 8.254ff.).¹⁷ It is at this that he sings the story of Ares and Aphrodite:

So spoke Alkinoos, and a herald sprang up at once to fetch the hollow lyre from the King's palace. And nine umpires (*aisymnetai*) stood up, chosen to serve the people and accustomed to order things aright in such contests (*agones*). They smoothed over a dance floor, and cleared a fine spacious ring. Then the herald returned with the clear-sounding lyre for Demodokos. He stepped into the middle of the ring, and round him stood the young boys

who were skilled in dancing, and they began to tread out a rhythmic measure.
Odysseus gazed at the flashing feet, and his heart was filled with wonder.
(*Od.* 8.256–64; Shewring's transl. adapted.)

In the famous description of a city at peace portrayed on Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18 (and probably earlier than the *Odyssey*), we find a striking range of songs. First we meet marriage celebrations, and a choral wedding hymn. The people are leading the brides from their maiden chambers, 'and the loud marriage song was arising' (**πολὺς δ' ὕμναιος ὀρώρει**) with dancers, flutes and lyres (*Il.* 18.491–6). A little later, in the idyllic scene of grape-harvesting, there is a boy who accompanies the work with the lyre and also sings the Linos song; and they join in with dancing:

and in their midst a youth with a singing lyre played charmingly
upon it for them, and sang the beautiful song for Linos
in a light voice, and they followed him, and with singing and whistling
and light dance steps of their feet kept time to the music.
(*Il.* 18.569–72; Lattimore's transl.)

There is also a depiction of a dance on a dance-floor 'like those which Daidalos built in Knossos for Ariadne of the beautiful locks'; and two acrobats lead off the *molpe* (measures of song with dancing) (*Il.* 18.590–606).

At the funeral of Hector, we meet funeral dirges and laments which are not dissimilar from funerary practice later in the archaic period, though perhaps more restrained. Here are professionals and private individuals: 'And seated beside him were the singers (**ᾄδοῦς**) who were to lead the dirge, and the singers chanted the song of sorrow, and the women mourned beside them' (*Il.* 24.720–2). There follow the three laments (*gooi*) for Hector by Andromache, Hecuba and Helen. We seem to have here a song by professional singers, then keening from the women, then arising from that, the individual laments of the three women.¹⁸

There is more singing and dancing to celebrate a marriage in Odysseus' palace in Ithaca (*Od.* 4.17–19), and singing and dancing led by Nausikaa in Phaiacia (*Od.* 6.100ff.). Calypso sings at the loom, 'singing with a lovely voice' (*Od.* 5.61), so does Circe (*Od.* 10.221). Achilles breaks the heroic rules by singing of the *klea andron* himself (*Il.* 9.185–91). Patroclus is listening, it is true, but Achilles seems to be singing to himself, for himself (9.189). There is a special irony here, at this point in the *Iliad*, and it has been seen as a mark of Achilles' 'unique self-reflective consciousness that he has become his own poet'.¹⁹ But it is also a reminder of what is sometimes denied, that even in an oral society singing and composing songs alone is not inconceivable.²⁰

Singing is an accompaniment to meals and drink: 'wine that crazes a man's wits and urges even the wise man to burst into song' (*Od.* 14.463–6). Or there are formal hymns for ritual occasions—perhaps akin to the later 'Homeric hymns': not only the marriage hymns (above), but also a paian to Apollo (*Il.* 1.472–4):

All day long they propitiated the god with singing
chanting a splendid hymn to Apollo, these young Achaians
singing to the one who works from afar, who listens in gladness...
(Lattimore's transl.)

Similarly, at *Iliad* 22.391, Achilles himself suggests a paian: 'But now, young men of the Achaians, let us go back, singing a victory paian, to our hollow ships'.²¹

Some of these may readily be classed as work songs, a common type of oral poetry,²² or as popular songs; there are professional singers, *demiourgoi* who may travel around, and there are non-professionals, narrative songs by bards heard in silence, and songs involving a large group, with singing and dancing. The point remains that even in an age where poetry was probably dominated—and is certainly dominated in the modern view—by the Homeric bard who sang tales of the past heroes in princely halls, poetry or song reached out beyond the *basileis* and into several genres which are easily recognizable in the poetic activity of the later seventh and sixth centuries. The Greek world was already a song culture.

In the archaic period, poetry or song marked most serious and many less momentous occasions over such a wide spectrum that it becomes almost tautologous to talk of the influence of poetry, so deeply is it embedded in the society. It marked religious ritual and rites of passage, celebrated and commemorated, preserved the past, was the natural accompaniment of convivial gatherings. Modern discussion is often so preoccupied with metrical divisions, that it would perhaps be useful here to look in some detail at these occasions.

At a funeral, there would be dirges, or *threnoi*, and the wilder, more grief-laden laments (*gooi*). Funerals were occasions for family ostentation, prestige and competition, particularly for the great aristocratic clans. It is therefore hardly surprising that the Athenian lawgiver Solon tried to curb set dirges (τὸ θρῆνειν πεποιημένα), as well as the extravagance of the tombs themselves.²³ Some kind of funeral lament called the *elegos* may also have been performed.²⁴ The poetic accompaniment, then, enhanced the social and political implications of the funeral, as well as marking the lamentation. The great poet Simonides (late sixth to early fifth centuries) wrote *threnoi*, as did Pindar,²⁵ but the vast mass of *threnoi* and laments were never recorded in writing, or if they were, have not survived. The question of whether or not these latter should be seen merely as 'popular songs' seems, again, misplaced. Both ancient and modern Greek evidence suggests that the women (always women) who sang the laments put considerable care and energy into their composition.²⁶ They are the unrecorded poets of Greek society, and their insertion into the picture reminds us just how prevalent this funeral poetry must have been.

An elaborate series of songs surrounded weddings: the *hymenaios* or wedding song, choral poetry which we have already encountered in Homer; and *epithalamia* of various kinds, hymns sung by a chorus, before the bridal chamber, as the name suggests, either during the evening, or at dawn.²⁷ Some *partheneia* (maiden songs), sung by a chorus of girls, may have been connected with a wedding.²⁸ Sappho is known to have written *epithalamia*, her only poetry for formal occasions.²⁹ Pindar also wrote *partheneia* (frs. 94a, 94b Maehler). The choruses might be composed of relatives and friends, the types of song apparently precisely differentiated according to the various stages of the occasion.

Various types of song accompanied other ritual occasions: *prosodia* or processional songs; paians in honour of Apollo (as in the *Iliad*) sung by a chorus, and named after the characteristic cry ἦ ἔ Παῖαν, asking for help or giving thanks. Dithyrambs, choral songs in honour of Dionysus, became the subject of dithyrambic contests,

probably one reason why many of the great poets, Pindar, Simonides, and Bakchylides, wrote them.³⁰ Many major religious festivals or religious occasions would have song. Bowie has suggested that some of the long narrative elegy which dealt with legendary and early 'history' may in fact have been performed at public festivals: for instance Mimnermos' *Smyrneis* which dealt with the foundation of Smyrna, Semonides' 'arkhaiologia' of Samos or Xenophanes' poem on the foundation of Colophon and the colonization of Elea.³¹ (Elegy has often been associated with funerals, but verse in this metre does in fact cover a wide range of topics and differs in scale.³²) Several festivals had poetic contests (*agones musikoi*) which involved various kinds of poetic performance: performance of rhapsody (stichic verse without instrumental accompaniment)—whose most renowned practitioners are the much maligned rhapsodes who sang the poems of Homer; kitharody, solo singing accompanied by the kithara (concert lyre);³³ and choral lyric, with its chorus, music and dance. These poetic performances at religious festivals are attested with varying degrees of uncertainty from perhaps as early as the eighth century at Olympia (though never officially), Ithome and Delos, and at Sparta (the Karneia), Sikyon and Delphi in the seventh century, and then at Athens in the Panathenaia and Dionysia, which were established as occasions for poetic performance in the sixth century. Thus the most famous poetic competition of all, the Athenian Dionysia with its competing tragedies and comedies, was a culmination of what was in fact an archaic phenomenon to be found in several other earlier festivals.³⁴

The intricate epinician odes in honour of victors in the games would be performed by choruses of fellow citizens at the victor's home or city, in front of an audience, then repeated at private celebrations.³⁵ They then continued to be sung in solo performances at symposia.³⁶ There are hints that other triumphs, such as the attainment of high office, might be the subject of victory song. Pindar's *Nemean* 11, for instance, is for a man just elected as president of the council in Tenedos: presumably it, too, would be performed at some public occasion.

Symposia were the arenas for poetry of all sorts—indeed there is a modern tendency to insert almost every category of literary activity into this context. Drinking songs, or *skolia*, were short, occasional and probably usually trivial, usually improvised on the spot.³⁷ There were also *komoi*, songs sung by men after one symposium when they were on the way to another (Plato's *Symposium* is in fact interrupted by two groups of komasts, the first with Alcibiades among its number³⁸). But the symposium would also be the occasion for more lasting poetry, including much elegy.³⁹ Arkhilokhos and Alkaïos probably performed much of their poetry to fellow aristocrats in symposia. The gnomic and admonitory poetry collected under Theognis' name would have graced such dinner parties, and much of it is actually concerned with behaviour proper to the symposium.⁴⁰ Theognis even claims that Kynos, whom his verse advises, will be immortal because his name will continue to be on the lips of guests at the feast (237–54). The atmosphere of the archaic symposium is well conveyed by Xenophanes, himself probably singing in one (fr. 1.1–15):

For now the floor is clean and the hands of every guest, and the cups; one boy puts woven wreaths about our heads, another brings round a jug of fragrant perfume; the mixing bowl stands full of good cheer...The altar in the

midst is hung with flowers, and the house is filled with dancing (*molpe*) and feasting. Now must good men sing hymns to the god with pious tales and pure words.

Then, he continues, when they have made their libation they can drink, and he declares what kind of poetry he thinks is suitable (not mythical; that is 'not useful', l. 23). This would perhaps be the context where Xenophanes' philosophical verse was first heard. Indeed the verse of the later Presocratics Empedocles and Parmenides might also have been performed amidst friends or initiates in such a semi-formal setting, the verse precursors of the (prose) philosophical discussions portrayed in Plato's (or Xenophon's) *Symposium*.⁴¹

That still does not exhaust the arenas for performance. Even military campaigning might have poetic accompaniment. According to the Athenian orator Lysurgus (speaking in the fourth century), the Spartan army had the exhortations of Tyrtaios recited to them in front of the king's tent (Lyc. 1.106–7). It is not known whether this practice really went back to Tyrtaios' own time (seventh century), when Sparta was less militarized, but he is, on the other hand, attributed with marching songs (*PMG* 856–7), and these would, assuredly, in the seventh century, have been meant for a real military context. We are also told by Philochorus, again rather later in the fourth century, that Tyrtaios' poetry had its after-dinner role in the Spartan army's equivalent of the symposium: on campaign, Spartan hoplites would take it in turns to sing Tyrtaios, after the paian, and the best singer would be rewarded with meat.⁴²

We should probably also expect a less openly martial setting for the military exhortations (in elegiac verse) to fight bravely, that are most extensively preserved for Tyrtaios himself, but are also attested for Kallinos of Ephesus, also in the seventh century (fr. 1W), and perhaps Mimnermos (fr. 14W) and Arkhilokhos (fr. 3W).⁴³ There may be some significance in the possible Ionian origin of this kind of verse, suggested by West.⁴⁴ At any rate it is attested rather early, which implies that it was a flourishing form of exhortation in the developing Ionian cities of the eighth century and perhaps before. Some public gathering of the citizenry, who would after all be soldiers, would be appropriate, perhaps in the agora or in some religious festival: a more formal setting or *polis* equivalent, perhaps, to the gathering of the Greek host by Agamemnon, in the agora, at the beginning of the *Iliad* (2.50ff.).

Exactly the same context (agora or *polis* festival) may be supposed for the more overtly political poetry of Tyrtaios and Solon.⁴⁵ Tyrtaios' poem, *Eunomia* (*On Good Order*; frs. 1–4 W), connected with the new political order arising from the conquest of Messenia, was as much addressed to the citizen body as his exclusively military exhortations, and it actually incorporated changes made recently to the political rights of those citizens (cf. Plut. *Lyc.* 6).

Solon's *Salamis* (frags. 1–3W) was an attempt to rouse the Athenians to fight to acquire Salamis, very reminiscent of Tyrtaios' rousing verses against the Messenians. It is clear that Solon was not following normal practice in Athens, for he excuses the verse form: 'A herald I come from lovely Salamis, setting before you the glory of verses in place of a speech' (κόσμον ἐπέων ᾠδὴν ἀντ'ἀγορῆς θέμενος, fr. 1.2). But which normal practice? Since the poetic conceit here is that he is a herald, this 'apology' cannot be taken too literally. But we are still left with the implication that

he presented this poem in the agora, in public. One suspects similar contexts—perhaps also religious festivals, for politics was never separated in archaic Greek society from religious rites—from the other poems in which he reproached the various groups in Athens for destroying the city, and set out moral principles and reflections on the problems of stasis. Symposia might be another forum. But at least we must contemplate the strong possibility that verse, and verse propagating martial exhortation and, effectively, political rhetoric, did penetrate the agora, and was somehow presented to the citizen body by public performance.⁴⁶ The prevalence of poetry at all levels and occasions of Greek society in this period suggests that we really do not need to look for a purely ‘literary’ publication for these poems divorced from some live occasion.⁴⁷ It is characteristic of later incomprehension that Plutarch or his source thought Solon had had to feign madness (*Sol.* 8.1–3).

I have concentrated almost exclusively upon occasion and social context at the expense of metrical categories, partly because occasion tends to receive less attention. The difficulty in finding a common character to poetry of any one metre (e.g. elegy) is linked to the fact that the Greeks themselves (before the later classical period) classified according to occasion rather than metre—hence the names, *partheneion*, dithyramb, etc. It is more useful, for example, to talk of epic than of poetry in hexameters (which were also used frequently for grave epigrams). Elegiac verse, particularly, defies any attempt to fit it into a single category.⁴⁸ It can perhaps be characterized very vaguely by a tendency to ‘the expression of opinions in the form of general propositions’, arguments, a certain dispassionate tone, and in short a general ‘Ionicism’, the metre an Ionian used ‘when he had something to say in poetry’.⁴⁹ This would indeed connect with the fact that elegy was usually, if not always, recited, rather than sung to instrumental accompaniment.⁵⁰ But this only emphasizes still more the link between genre and occasion. Perhaps the most useful distinction for our purposes is that between ‘monody’ and choral poetry: between poetry which is sung to a musical instrument, usually the lyre, by a single person, often the poet (i.e. lyric poetry which is non-choral), and which could therefore belong to informal, often private occasions (e.g. Sappho, Alkaios); and poetry sung by a chorus, which therefore tended to demand more training, preparation and probably expense (e.g. Pindar, Alkman). It was this latter which involved a wider group of people, perhaps representative of the citizen body. In so far as one can generalize, choral lyric can perhaps be associated with more solemn occasions, rituals, rites of passage, hymns to the gods, moments which involved a wider group in the community, perhaps the whole community. The fact that choruses were often citizens, and that later, choruses might be provided by the city, seems to reinforce the impression that the more formal choral odes were somehow more official, more centred on the community.⁵¹

But with this enormous range of types of performance, it is at least clearly impossible to generalize about the role of archaic poets. Poetry was everywhere, so were singers and poets. In this song culture, verse served to mark and to elevate solemn ritual occasions, celebrations, festivals, the worship of the gods; and yet it was also produced at informal gatherings, over work, before battle, over food and drink and in the relaxed atmosphere of the aristocratic symposium (or non-aristocratic equivalents). A sharp distinction between ‘popular song’ or ‘folk song’ and poetry seems inappropriate here, privileging the more refined literary accomplishments that have,

because of their quality, been preserved for us. In this more general sense, the poet, whether he or she was anonymous or of Panhellenic stature, could mark and dignify, or in other contexts preserve and make memorable, lifting an occasion above the commonplace, or an utterance above the dreary level of prose. This was not confined to the aristocratic strata of Greek society.

MEMORY, PRESERVATION AND FAME

Let us look more closely at the role of poetry for preservation and memory, and for the conveying of wisdom.

To a large extent this must be tied to the problem of preserving and remembering the past in a society reliant on oral communication, in which memory was bound to be short. A constant preoccupation is that of fame and survival in memory, from the society portrayed in the Homeric poems to the latter-day heroes Pindar celebrated. It was usually the poet who provided the opportunity to preserve that fame.

Verse is, by its formal nature, that much less subject to the fluidity of mere prose narrative and it is well known that traditions preserved in verse usually have a better rate of accurate transmission than those in prose.⁵² This may be one reason why moralizing reflections and perhaps even the laws of some early lawgivers were set in verse. Some thought Solon tried to put his laws into verse (Plut. *Sol.* 3)—and even if he did not, it is interesting that later ancient writers were prepared even to contemplate the possibility. There is a tradition that the Athenians sang the laws of the early (seventh-century) lawgiver Kharondas when they were drinking.⁵³ Kharondas was also said to have made the citizens sing his laws at festivals so that they should become ingrained.⁵⁴ The role of poetry for memorization is clear here, even if we cannot believe all the traditions, and it merges rapidly and almost imperceptibly with that of education.

But ease of memorization is, of course, only one element. The very pleasure poetry brings will cause it to continue being sung or recited. The Homeric poet implies this several times and gives his characters some wry remarks about the role of song and their future place in it. While the achievements of men, the *klea andron*, are self-evidently the subject of song, and the poet helps preserve their *kleos*,⁵⁵ yet it is equally the sufferings of the heroes which are a subject for the future. As Helen remarks bitterly in the *Iliad* (6.357f.), the gods have set upon us an evil doom, ‘so that we may be a subject of song of men to come’ (ὥς καὶ ὀπίσσω/ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ’ αἰοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοι). Agamemnon in the underworld bitterly contrasts Penelope with Helen; Helen who will be a ‘hateful song’ (*Od.* 24.192–202). More objectively, perhaps, Alkinoos remarks to Odysseus that the gods have spun out doom for men ‘so that there may be song for those to come’ (*Od.* 8.580, ἵνα ᾗσι καὶ ἔσσομένοισιν αἰοιδῇ). At *Od.* 3.203–4, it is said of Orestes that the Achaeans will carry his *kleos* far, and ‘his song for those to come’. Song is a proper part of entertainment, along with food.⁵⁶ The pleasure of song is not diminished, nay, may even be enhanced by the sufferings it records (thus Odysseus rewards Demodokos for his truthful telling of the suffering at Troy, *Od.* 8.491), by its mimetic quality.⁵⁷ It is not simply a matter, here, of recording *kleos*—not only do the poets of the *Iliad*

and *Odyssey* muse subtly on the relative value of *kleos* within the heroic world,⁵⁸ but, when one actually looks at the role of the poet as perceived there, his contribution to the preservation of this *kleos* can be exaggerated.

Kleos is the pursuit of the Homeric hero, a fundamental and recurrent preoccupation: as Hector says of the man he has killed, he will have a *sema* or tomb, ‘and some day one of the men to come will say, as he sees it, “This is the mound of a man who died long ago in battle, who was one of the bravest, and glorious Hector killed him.” So he will speak one day, and my glory (*kleos*) will not be forgotten’ (*Il.* 7.87–91). Glory required bravery, probably early death—a dilemma posed in its starkest form in Achilles’ choice—and it formed part of the complex of the competitive pursuit of honour of the Homeric hero. *Kleos* was dependent, like honour (*time*), on the valuation of yourself by other men. It would also be preserved to future generations by the poet. But while it has frequently been said that the Greek poet is ‘master of *kleos*’, and while also the poets of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* present this *kleos* from a complex series of perspectives and (especially in the *Odyssey*) some irony, the relation of the poet’s *own* performance to the acquisition and maintenance of *kleos* does not seem to be as straightforward—or as automatic—as is usually implied. Even when Phemios pleads with Odysseus for his life, he says that he sings for gods and men, not that he creates and perpetuates fame (*Od.* 22.344–53). In the remark of Hector I have just quoted, the poet is conspicuous by his absence: Hector is assuming that the *sema* itself will be the memorial, trigger for memory and therefore for people telling each other about Hector (though this does not, of course, *exclude* poetry as a further source). *Kleos* seems to have here a life of its own, independent of the poet. Homeric heroes are rather concerned about physical memorials in the form of tombs.⁵⁹

For the Homeric bard is portrayed as repeating what he and his audience know to be true, and this is a large part of his virtue. Certainly it is the poet who preserves these tales—and some false modesty may be discerned—but there seems to be less self-consciousness and arrogance expressed about the poet’s potential actually to create that fame than we find later in the archaic poets. The Homeric bard does not actually claim that he *creates kleos*: the heroes do that.⁶⁰

Thus the bard’s invocation to the Muses takes on a rather different tone. At the beginning of the Catalogue of Ships (*Iliad* 2.484ff.), the poet calls on the Muses not for inspiration, but for the facts, that is, for memory:

Tell me now, you Muses who have your homes on Olympus,
For you, who are goddesses, are there, and you know all things,
And we have heard only the rumour of it and know nothing.
Who then of those were the chief men and the lords of the Danaans?
(Lattimore’s transl.)

Compare, also, Odysseus’ commendation of Demodokos because he told the tales of the Trojan War as if he was there or heard from someone who was (*Od.* 8.491).⁶¹ As Detienne has underlined, it is the Muses in this society—and therefore the bards as mouthpieces of the Muses—who are the guarantors of truth; and truth is intimately linked to memory, for the word for truth, *aletheia*, is literally the negation of forgetfulness, *lethe*.⁶² Indeed, if Homeric epic song is a kind of history,⁶³ still less is it the creation of the poet.

The later archaic poets, however, are not merely telling stories: invocations to the Muses are not for the facts, but for inspiration and poetic skill, and they assert more confidently that it is they themselves who create fame. *Kleos* is the result, as it were, of a two-way achievement of poet and the man he celebrates. Goldhill has stressed most convincingly the ambiguity and discontinuity in the poets' creation of *kleos*:⁶⁴ but the extent to which the poet creates it in the first place seems to be a new claim—and we should wonder why. Thus in the Ibykos fragment we began with (*PMG* 282(a) 47f.), Polykrates will have fame both through song and through Ibykos' own fame—but not, we may note, through his own excellence, as Hector would have said. Theognis (237–52) tells Kyrnos that it will be through Theognis' verses, sung in the symposium, that Kyrnos will gain fame:⁶⁵

'I have given you wings to fly with ease over the boundless sea and all the land.
In every meal or feast, you shall be there, lying on the lips of many a guest
And lovely youths shall sing you clear and well...'

(237–9 W)

'You shall never die, nor shall you lose your fame, but men will think of you
as one of an immortal name, Kyrnos, who ranges the land of Greece and the
islands...'

(245–7 W)

Simonides scornfully proclaims his superiority in the perpetuation of memory in his poem about Kleoboulos, foolish Kleoboulos who thought his fame would be secured by a stone inscription: 'That stone even a man's hand could smash' (fr. 581 *PMG*).

Pindar's role in securing fame for the victor pervades his poetry:

εὖθ' ἔπ' ἐπὶ τοῦτον, ἄγε, Μοῖσα,
οὔρον ἐπέων,
εὐκλέα· παροικομένων γὰρ ἀνέρων
ᾠδαὶ
καὶ λόγοι τὰ καλὰ σφιν ἔργ' ἐκόμισαν, . . .

(*Nem.* 6.28–30)

Guide straight upon this victor, Muse, a glorious breeze of song. For when men have passed away, songs and legends carry home for them their noble deeds.⁶⁶

Or *Pyth.* 3.112–15:

Of Nestor and the Lycian Sarpedon,
Those household names,
The loud lines speak, which craftsmen built with skill,
And thence we know them.
Greatness in noble songs
Endures through time: but to win this, few find easy.

(Bowra's transl.)

Memory is made possible by streams of song, and the highest poetic skill:

Ancient grace sleeps, and men forget whatever does not arrive
at the highest peak of poetic skill yoked with glorifying
streams of song.

(*Isthm.* 7.16–19)

The poet is superior to the sculptor because song moves around, a mere inscription is immobile: *Nem.* 5.1–5, ‘I am no maker of statues’.

And at *Olympian* 10.86–94:⁶⁷

So, when a man has done noble deeds, Hagesidamos, and descends to Hades without song, he has spent his breath in vain, and won little pleasure by his labour. But on you, the sweet-voiced lyre and the pleasant flute shed delight (*kharis*), the Pierian Maidens, daughters of Zeus take charge of your far-flung glory.

The complex metaphors of song in Pindar express its profound power not only in celebrating the victor against all others, triumphing over the rest, but also in its role of enhancing, continuing and therefore renewing the *kleos* of the victor’s family, and in strengthening its continuity with the next generation.⁶⁸

But what we tend to find are not claims simply for all song, any poetry, but for Pindar’s, for Simonides’. It is the peculiar excellence of the archaic poet’s song which is going to provide the victor with the glory he desires, and the poet is not merely recounting his deeds as they stand, but actually creating his fame through the celebratory ode (compare particularly *Olympian* 10 above: mere achievement is not enough).

One cannot help seeing here hints of acute competition both between poets themselves and between poetry and other modes of commemoration and transmission of fame. Poets like Pindar (who is intensely self-conscious about his relation with his patron), Simonides and Ibykos, who celebrated individuals, were in essence locked into the highly competitive rivalry of archaic aristocratic society—and a rivalry in which an Olympian victory could bring powerful political prestige. This is another reason why it is far too simple to say that the poet’s main function was to preserve and perpetuate glory. There were alternative ways to do this: we should not see this poetry in a literary isolation. Elaborate funerary memorials, funerary mounds, carved stelai, written epitaphs and cults of the recent dead all sought to memorialize⁶⁹ and archaic legislation limiting funerary expenditure only underlines how these were also a powerful form of aristocratic rivalry. Even in the illiterate world of Homer, *kleos* was associated with the gravestone.⁷⁰ The written inscriptions could perpetuate the name with remarkable ease and the permanency of stone—and compared to a commissioned poet, they were cheaper.⁷¹ Like song, the tomb epitaph sought to perpetuate memory of the *oikos*. It is striking how many of the more complex epitaphs are to those who died an untimely death or who died without heirs, thus without perpetuating their house.⁷² *Kleos* is also mentioned on these inscriptions: for instance:

This tomb I, Idameneos, have erected, so that I should have *kleos*. May Zeus utterly ruin anyone who harms it.⁷³

The funerary memorial served many similar aims to the celebratory song.

In addition, the bestowal of *kleos* was, in certain states by the late sixth century or even earlier, increasingly monopolized by the *polis* itself. The extravagance of funerary rituals, as we have seen, might be limited, and certain cities, particularly Sparta, managed with especial efficiency to crush individual ostentation and self-glorification. Tyrtaios' poem on excellence or *arete* (fr. 12W), redefined *arete* and *kleos* in terms of the community:

I would neither remember a man nor put him in my tale (*logos*)
For prowess in the foot race or the wrestling...
(lines 1–2)

Nor even if he had all fame (*doxa*) except for warlike strength (9)
...
This is excellence (*arete*), this is the noblest and best
Prize among men to win for a young man
A common good both for the city and the whole people
When a man stands firm in the front line without flinching...
(13–16)

Then, of the man who has perished in battle:

Nor does his good fame or his name ever perish,
But he remains immortal, though underground...
(31–2)

The redefinition of excellence entirely in terms of bravery in war (rather than mere athletic prowess), fighting and dying for the city (and, it must be said, for one's children), and of glory and immortal memory that is conferred by the city, could hardly be clearer.⁷⁴

So, while Simonides and Pindar hardly needed (yet) to fight a rearguard action, their poetry is part of a competitive world not only of rival poets, but of possible, competing forms of memorial, their *raison d'être* being questioned by certain *polis* ideology. While the survival of their poetry to our day suggests that their claims to create *kleos* were to a large extent justified, we should not be beguiled by their words into thinking that this was the only effective way to memory and glory. They hint at their rivals themselves. The dedications and epitaphs which abound in the sixth century particularly would have provided a comparative democratization of memorial down the social scale.

POETS AND WISDOM

A rather different relationship to the Muses is voiced by the archaic poets, and in this too, one sees a claim to a superior moral authority to their audience.⁷⁵

Thus in Solon's prayer to the Muses, daughters of Memory, poets learn their wisdom, *sophie*, (or skill) from the Muses (fr. 13W, 51–2). Theognis sees the poet as attendant and messenger of the Muses, and having *sophie*: 'The attendant and messenger of the Muses must, if he has any exceptional knowledge, be unstinting with his wisdom' (769–70). He explains that he is putting his seal upon his poetry in terms of his practice of *sophie*:

Κύρνε, σοφίζομένω μὲν ἔμοι σφρηγὶς ἐπικείσθω
τοῖοδ' ἔπεσιν

(19–20)

Kyros, let a seal be placed by me as I practise my wisdom (*sophizomenoi*)...

That he is referring more to wisdom than merely skill, another possible meaning of *sophie*, is suggested by the way he continues to bestow moralizing advice upon Kyros (27–30).⁷⁶

This claim for authority and wisdom via the Muses is rather different from that made by the Homeric bard. It brings us to the image of the poet as the embodiment of traditional values, as spokesman of his community, or (closely related) as educator.⁷⁷ Thus Redfield, for example, 'The poets were figures with special status, parallel to that of the priests, whom, in this relatively unpriestly society, they to a large extent replaced. Poets were central, integrative figures within archaic culture.' Or Goldhill, 'The poet becomes the spokesman, the interpreter, the questioner, the advocate of the polis', a '*sophos*' like Solon.⁷⁸

The Homeric bard was the possessor and transmitter of the past; and thus the highest praise given to a bard in the epics is that his narrative is a truthful account of what happened, 'as if you had been there yourself or learned from another who was' (*Od.* 8.91). Later poets might similarly be the codifiers and/or transmitters of their city's myths and local legends: compare, for instance, Xenophanes' elegiac poem on the early history of Colophon, Mimnermos' on Smyrna, Panyassis on 'Ionian history'. But to see 'the poets' in general, and as a coherent class, as spokesmen of the community, is surely to go too far, and may be confusing the activities and status of poets amongst their contemporaries, and their prestige and role amongst later generations.

The traditional character of the Homeric poems has made the idea of the bard as moral educator particularly tempting. Havelock's influential formulation was that the Homeric bard provided a 'tribal encyclopedia'.⁷⁹ And it has been suggested that the reason Agamemnon left the bard with the duty of overseeing Clytemnestra—a duty he performed singularly badly—was, similarly, that the bard was the guardian of society's values.⁸⁰ Yet the poet of the *Iliad* himself can analyse and question the heroic code, as is well known, the poet of the *Odyssey* can treat with irony the claims of the poet to tell the truth.⁸¹ We are not seeing a seamless and uncritical reproduction of traditional values even here, so early, and there is a danger of confusing the immense educational prestige and central position of Homer in later Greek culture—which no one would deny—with the Homeric bard's cultural and moral role amongst his eighth-century contemporaries. The later paideutic and normative role of Homer—enhanced by the rhapsodic contests at Athens' Panathenaia from the sixth century—was already firm enough by the late sixth century for Xenophanes to criticize his enormous influence.⁸² But if we look at the bard's status in the poems themselves, he is revered, certainly, and is spokesman of the Muses, but he is still mainly a teller of tales. His special skill is, above all, the ability to hold people spellbound with tales of the past (the truth), with fluent and flawless improvisation.

It is obvious that certain of the archaic poets were indeed a fundamental part of

Greek culture in the fifth century, sung in the symposium, taught and learned by heart in schools. Socrates criticizes the assumption that one learns anything from a poet in the *Apology* (22 a-c) and *Protagoras* (347e). We must owe the very survival of many texts to their continuing performance in these contexts, and more important, the role of at least some as moral educators. Pindar's odes, for instance, had a lively and secure circulation in the fifth and even fourth century,⁸³ Theognis' survival is very possibly due to the interest taken in his openly aristocratic ideology amongst disaffected Athenians under the radical democracy (Plato knew his verses well).⁸⁴ For Tyrtaios, it is uncertain how his verse was propagated in the seventh century, but the late testimony about the context of his poetry is secure for the fourth century, and in Plato's *Laws* the Athenian remarks to the Cretan, 'I imagine that you, too, have heard these poems, for our friend here [i.e. the Spartan] must be saturated in them, I should think' (*Laws* I 629b). Solon has an almost legendary stature in the Athenian democracy, widely regarded as its founder, and often taken in the popular parlance of the fourth-century lawcourts as the creator even of laws demonstrably later than his time. His poems were widely known and recited.⁸⁵ The circulation of other poets is well attested.⁸⁶

One of the effects of the new education provided by the sophists was to drive out of fashion this singing of poetry after dinner. This is most vividly expressed by Strepsiades' complaints about his son in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (1354–8). Strepsiades had asked his son to take up his lyre and sing a song by Simonides, but his son retorted that it was old-fashioned to play the lyre and sing at a dinner party. Such had been the centrality of poetry in Athenian cultural life down to the late fifth century.

This is exactly the image that is usually envisaged of the poet in archaic society. Yet if we consider the poets in their contemporary setting, a rather more complex picture reveals itself. We have seen the open and confident claims as creators of fame, purveyors of wisdom, in which archaic poets seem to go far beyond the possibilities open to the Homeric bard. How could they claim this? What has changed about the nature of the poet and his influence in society?

When we look more closely at the main poets whose work has come down to us in any quantity, and see it, moreover, against the mass of poetic creation and performance that we must assume of archaic society, two main problems emerge. First, a general category of 'the poet' does little justice to the broad spectrum of poetic activities, types of poetry and types of poet. Which poets do we really envisage when we think of the poet as 'embodiment of traditional values', for instance? Not really the folk-poets (nor the ritual and occasional poetry). Indeed it is the totally traditional and derivative poetry which tends to be dismissed as popular song. The despised rhapsodes, who recited Homeric verse, are not considered (by us), though they may have done more to preserve traditional poetry than most.⁸⁷ A phrase like Redfield's (a particularly elegant formulation), 'Poets were central, integrative figures in archaic culture', seems to refer to figures like Solon, Tyrtaios, Arkhilokhos, Pindar, Theognis: in other words, precisely those poets who tell their audience that they have superior wisdom and skill. It is a select group.

Second, many of even the most regarded in the canon are highly idiosyncratic figures, highly critical or (so far as we can tell) even rather innovative figures. Moreover,

they are usually aristocrats, whose self-confident, authoritative position may be bound up with their status as leaders of their society. The Peisistratid Hipparkhos wrote epigrams of gnomic wisdom for the general improvement of the Athenians ([Plato], *Hipparchus*, 228b–229d). It is at least as much worth considering the poet as ‘critic’, or the poet ‘as aristocrat’, as more romantic images of the poet as ‘sage’. The apparent transition from traditional *aoidos*, dependent on the patronage of *basileis*, to the archaic poets who claim special wisdom and superiority, must be related.

If we take Alkaios, for instance, much of his verse seems designed for the aristocratic circle of the symposium, and what is more, for fellow members of the same political faction. His political insults, his slighting references to Pittakos, now successful leader of Mytilene and a previous ally of Alkaios, his specious claims to champion the people, his self-pitying descriptions of exile, all combine to make one of the most vivid portrayals for the historian of factional strife in this tumultuous period of Greek history. ‘The low-born Pittakos they have set up for tyrant of that city spiritless and ill-starred; all together they shout his praises’:⁸⁸ Alkaios called Pittakos a tyrant, Aristotle was later to call him an ‘*aisymnetes*’, according him the status of a formal office akin to that of lawgiver.⁸⁹ This is partisan poetry of the highest order, indeed it was known in antiquity as ‘poems of stasis’ (Strabo, *Geog.* 13.617). There is little evidence that this stasis was any more than in-fighting between rival aristocratic factions, with frequent changing of sides, a power-struggle between the nobles which so often in the archaic period gave rise to a tyrant. Alkaios’ poetry would be political rhetoric, as Dionysios of Halicarnassus said, if the metre were removed (*On Imitation* 421).

Theognis, too, is an independent aristocrat involved in similar political intrigues, his poetry designed for the aristocratic symposium. The ‘Theognidean corpus’—admittedly a rather remarkable case—continues the tradition of gnomic, moralizing poetry with a distinct aristocratic bent. It has recently been interpreted as ‘the crystallization of archaic and early classical poetic traditions emanating from Megara’,⁹⁰ or as a storehouse of education for aristocratic youths.⁹¹ Yet one can hardly evade the fact that while this verse might be articulating fairly conventional, fairly repetitive gnomic wisdom, it is the wisdom and ‘traditional values’ of a partisan group and one which, as Theognis so resents, is no longer in the ascendant.

Arkhilokhos was at least of high enough birth for his grandfather (or father?) to have founded the Parian colony at Thasos. Sappho—even Sappho—was not only of aristocratic birth, but seems to have been involved in some form of political exile: she was herself banished from Mytilene in one of its periods of stasis.⁹² Stesikhoros warned his fellow citizens in Himera against tyranny, trying to dissuade them from granting a bodyguard to the military leader Phalaris (Arist. *Rhet.* 1393 b 8–22). Xenophanes, renowned for his forthright rejection of many traditional Greek views (including the value of Homer, fr. 1.19–23W), seems not to have been a travelling *aoidos* or a rhapsode, as has often been thought, but an independent aristocrat.⁹³

We know little about either Alkman or Tyrtaios as individuals, but Tyrtaios’ poetry propounds values which seem to be part of the new political and military order in Sparta connected with the subjugation of the helots. His poetry incorporated an oracle which revoked a political reform generous to the rank and file of Spartan

citizens (fr. 4, with Plut. *Lyc.* 6). While it might be too crude for the seventh century to call this ‘propaganda’,⁹⁴ he seems heavily implicated in—and a highly successful spokesman for—the radical changes taking place in the Sparta of his time. As we have seen, his redefinition of *arete* pulls it away from the Homeric ideal of individual, competitive, prowess, away from mere athletic excellence, to one tied exclusively to war and the communal (military) endeavours of the *polis* (fr. 12, above). Tyrtaios is here the spokesman of the new order, his poetic skill devoted explicitly and obviously to reworking the old conventionally aristocratic and Homeric ideals for the new communal ethos of the *polis*. Immortal fame is transposed to the sphere of *polis* activity, memory is being located in the *polis* community as a whole.

As for Solon’s poetry, it hardly needs stressing that however elevated it may be in tone, it includes a defence of his reforms made as lawgiver with ultimate authority in the midst of stasis and the disintegration (if we may believe Solon) of the *polis*—and in the midst also of a situation in which he seems to have been able to make himself tyrant. Fragment 36 W (‘Where did I fall short of my purpose?’) is a most explicit explanation and defence of what he has done for Athens (though it may seem impossibly vague for the modern social historian): uplifted the marker stones, brought Athenians back from slavery, written down the laws. Other poems embodied moral condemnation of both sides in terms redolent of archaic morality. But we should not lose sight of the fact that, while Solon is posing as superior moral and political arbiter, ‘a wolf inside a pack of hounds’ (fr. 36.27W), this is poetry of reform, poetry by an Athenian aristocrat given authority as lawgiver and mediator, to set the city to rights. Any sensible attempt to justify or initiate reform would be in terms morally acceptable to the citizens, thus would indeed embody or develop certain ideas of archaic morality. Solon’s implicit claims to wisdom cannot be claims made simply as a poet, if they are that at all, but must be (largely) linked to his supreme position as arbitrator and legislator appointed by the Athenians.⁹⁵ The moral tone of his arguments, which do indeed confirm the image of the poet as a kind of sage, helped unite his political and social reforms to the high moral status often claimed by archaic poets. But they are also, presumably, one reason why his reforms were comparatively lasting in contrast to the upheavals of many other archaic cities.

It is hard to separate the influence these poets had as poets, from the power they had as members of an aristocratic community (Theognis, Alkaios), or aristocratic leaders of cities moving away from a political system in which all political power was confined to a tiny aristocratic elite (Solon, Alkaios, etc.). Moreover, much of this moral and exhortatory poetry has its context in the aristocratic symposium. Thus the recent stress on performance for understanding archaic poetry only underlines the fact that much of it belonged to an aristocratic milieu—and often a highly partisan one at that—rather than a ‘traditional’ one. The output of others (Solon, Tyrtaios particularly) seems meant for a wider citizen audience, the *polis*: that, as well as the context and in Solon’s case at least, his political status, emphasizes the probability that this was akin to political persuasion, in other words, rhetoric. Political and moral positions are argued out at length (something Alkaios, for instance, or Theognis, do not seem to need to do, addressing those of the same political stance). So in a sense this is rhetoric in verse, political and moral poetry for persuasion.

Gentili has discussed the ‘socio-economic status’ of the archaic poets, trying to

determine how far this actually affects the nature of the poetry.⁹⁶ And there has been much discussion of the nature and effect of patronage, mostly focusing on Pindar and Simonides.⁹⁷ But the problem of patronage, hampered in any case by shortage of evidence for any poet except Pindar, tends to obscure the political and social character of these other aristocratic poets. A crucial factor in the archaic poetry of praise, as opposed to earlier epic, is that the subjects of such poetry are both alive and powerful, but one should also consider more carefully the social and political status of the poets concerned. As soon as one scrutinizes the evidence for patrons and patronage, much of it melts away before one's eyes. Most of those whose poetry survives in any quantity seem to be independent, sometimes even political leaders in their own right, and thus quite immune from any limitations imposed by patronage. By contrast, the Homeric bard, while respected and considered divinely inspired, was clearly a social inferior to those he sang for—a travelling *demiourgos* or artisan (cf. *Od.* 1.337ff.). Even Phemios' plea for mercy at the end of the *Odyssey* (24.334–53) underlines his inferior status.

There are indeed changes in the sixth century which are relevant to poetic patronage. With the further development of Panhellenic festivals (producing Panhellenic victors), the addition of the Panathenaia and City Dionsysia at Athens, a great many more opportunities for competing poets and rhapsodes were opened up for patronage by individuals and cities. Tyrants liked to attract poets to their courts: Ibykos and Anacreon were at the court of Polykrates of Samos in the 530s, Hipparkhos the Peisistratid is said to have invited Anacreon and Simonides to his. Simonides is reputed to have been the first to charge a fee for his poetry commissioned by the aristocratic families of Greece; Pindar ostentatiously distanced himself from such greed (cf. *Isthm.* 2.1–13, 'The Muse has become a lover of gain'), but wrote epinicians for many of the most prominent aristocrats in Greece and a couple of Sicilian tyrants, Hieron of Syracuse and Theron of Akragas.

The reasons for this apparent shift to commissioned poets paid to praise individuals are too complex to discuss adequately here—perhaps partly a result of a desacralization of poetry from performance at religious occasions to more secular performance for individuals, or a desacralization of memory, perhaps also a function of the expense of a chorus once choral poetry became separated from cult occasions;⁹⁸ or of the sixth-century increase in tyrants and would-be leaders who needed poets to praise them (it is no coincidence that Panhellenic festivals and public buildings were often fostered by tyrants); or a reflection of increasingly focused aristocratic competition in the political sphere. But even so, we seem still to be dealing largely with an aristocratic network of mutual obligation and guest-friendship. Even those poets most connected with tyrants seem to circulate from court to court: Anacreon is associated with both Polykrates and Hipparkhos, Simonides is not exclusively associated with Hipparkhos, and seems to have been able to be a 'guest' of the Thessalian aristocrats, the Skopades (Cic. *De Or.* 2.86.353), and of Hieron of Syracuse. It is said that Ibykos could have become a tyrant, though he left Sicily, a byword for simple-mindedness.⁹⁹ Above all, Pindar, whose commissioned works at least survive in quantity, sings as an equal amongst his peers—even to Hieron, tyrant of Syracuse, whom he calls *xenos* (guest-friend, *Ol.* 1.103). The metaphors used of his songs revolve around concepts of favour, obligation and return, friendship and even gift exchange among *philoí*,¹⁰⁰ in

a manner which seems far removed from any crude and straightforward image of patron and client in a purely economic sense. These poets moved around over all Greece,¹⁰¹ but in a context so different from the travelling of the Homeric *demiourgos* that to apply the simple label of patronage seems bleak and inappropriate. The richest evidence of all, that of Pindar, should at least be taken seriously in its implication that many of these figures were aristocrats in a more subtle and nuanced network of peers—hence the ambiguity of the poet's relation to his patron in his conferral of *kleos*.

I suspect that that was one fundamental reason why the Homeric bard does not offer extensive moral advice, and why it is in the poetry of the later centuries that the poet seems able to boast of special wisdom, and the special faculty of actually creating *kleos*. The *basileis* in Homer do not, as a rule, seem to sing themselves (though, of course, Achilles does, uniquely). The aristocrats of the archaic city-states do, and they can produce moral, political and exhortatory poetry. The successors of the Homeric bards, therefore, must be the rhapsodes, the (to us, anonymous) composers of hymns and other occasional poetry. It is precisely because of this predominantly aristocratic status that the archaic poets needed to pay much less attention to the demands of a popular audience than has been suggested.¹⁰² We should see the great lyric poets against a background of largely anonymous, unrecorded but widespread poetic creation. It has been said that 'The ambition of the archaic poet was that his works should win him the honours and social and economic prestige necessary to sustain a position as sage'.¹⁰³ But many of the prominent poets—aristocrats in their own right—held that position anyway.

NOTES

- 1 See Goldhill's succinct discussion, *The Poet's Voice*, 69f.
- 2 Nagy, 'Early Greek views of poets and poetry', in *Cambr. H. of Lit. Criticism*, 9; Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans* (Baltimore, 1979), 16.
- 3 The Greek allows a rather different translation (see discussions in next note). But either way, the poet's fame is linked with the tyrant's: the *extent* to which the poet is making it dependent on his own is what is in question.
- 4 Cf. Woodbury, 'Ibycus and Polycrates', *Phoenix* 39 (1985), 193–220 (and works cited there); D. Page, 'Ibycus' poem in honour of Polycrates', *Aegyptus* 31 (1951), 158–72; Goldhill, 116–19 reads it as deliberately ambiguous.
- 5 See Lefkowitz, *Lives of the Greek Poets* (London 1981).
- 6 Lyc. I 106–7; also Plato, *Laws* 629 a.
- 7 B. Snell, *Discovery of the Mind* (Cambridge, Mass., 1953), followed by H. Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and Philosophy* (Oxford, 1975).
- 8 See, e.g., M. L. Fowler, *The Nature of Early Greek Lyric* (Toronto, 1987) most recently; H. Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley, 1971).
- 9 J. Herington, *Poetry into Drama* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, 1985), esp. Part 1. 2 and App. VI, for evidence on written preservation of archaic poetry; Page saw Arkhilokhos as an oral poet, 'Archilochus and the oral tradition', *Entretiens Hardt, Archiloche* (Vandoeuvres, 1963), 117–79; cf. Fowler, *ibid.* 13–33.

- 10 See Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns* (1982); cf. M.L. West, 'Is the *Works and Days* an oral poem?', in C. Brillante, M. Cantilena, C.O. Pavese, *I poemi epici rapsodici non omerici e la tradizione orale* (Padova, 1981), 53–67.
- 11 Esp. Herington, *ibid.*; Gentili, *Poetry and its Public* (1988); West, *Studies in Elegy and Iambus* (1974); Rösler, *Dichter und Gruppe* (1980).
- 12 Plato, *Laws* 700 b 7–701 b 3, is interesting as an anti-democratic fulmination against the corruption of the proper modes of song by the democratizing of performance.
- 13 Herington, *ibid.* ch. 1.
- 14 E.g. *Od.* 1.325–6, 22.330–53.
- 15 Esp. 8.65–70, 73–82 (on the quarrel between Odysseus and Achilles), 499–520 (on the wooden horse).
- 16 I. Morris, 'The use and abuse of Homer', *ClAnt* 5 (1986), 81–138. See, more generally on the *aidos* (from a vast selection): Walsh, *The Varieties of Enchantment* (1984), ch. 1; Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad* (1975); A. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (New York, 1960); C. Segal, 'Bard and audience in Homer', in *Homer's Ancient Readers*, ed. R. Lamberton and J.J. Keaney (1992), 3–29.
- 17 Burkert, 'The making of Homer in the 6th. c.' (1987), 47f., suggests it is the agora, and links the occasion with the general modernity of the Phaiacians.
- 18 Cf. the wailing of the Nereids and the singing of a lament by the Muses for Achilles, *Od.* 24.58–61, and M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament* (Cambridge, 1974).
- 19 Redfield, *ibid.* 36.
- 20 R. Thomas, *Literacy and Orality* (1992), 38–9, generally; Finnegan, *Oral Poetry* (1977), 80–6; Lord, *Singer of Tales* (1960), 21 (a Serbo-Croatian boy); Jensen, *The Homeric Question* (1980), 42.
- 21 See also: *aidoi* in *Il.* 2.597–600 (Thamyris the Thracian, struck by the Muses, 'a singer without memory' now); a maiden song, *Il.* 16.182–3; travelling singers who are *demiourgoi*, *Od.* 17.382–5; cf. also 8.43–5, 62–4. On singers and poetry in general in Homer, Redfield, *ibid.*, 30–41; Segal, 'Bard and audience in Homer' (1992); the non-bardic singing in Homer tends to be ignored.
- 22 Finnegan, *Oral Poetry* (s. v. index) gives anthropological examples.
- 23 Plut. *Sol.* 21; cf. Cic. *de Leg.* II 59 ff. There may also have been funeral speeches and verse encomia. See M. Alexiou, *The Ritual Lament* (Cambridge 1974) for ancient and modern dirges; Reiner, *Die rituelle Totenklage der Griechen* (Stuttgart and Berlin, 1938); L.M. Danforth, *The Death Rituals of Rural Greece* (Princeton, 1982).
- 24 See West, *Studies*, 2–9; Fowler, *ibid.* 86 ff.
- 25 Pindar, frs. 128a–139 Maehler.
- 26 Alexiou, *op. cit.*; cf. those by Andromache, Hecuba and Helen, *Il.* 24.723ff.
- 27 Schol. on Theocritus 18 (p. 331 Wendel), cited by A. Griffiths, 'Alcman's Partheneion: the morning after the night before', *QUCC* 14 (1972), 7–30, on Alcman fr. 1 PMG, which he argues is an *epithalamion*. Cf. further C. Calame, *Les chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque* (Rome, 1977). For the term *hymenaios*, Fowler, *ibid.* 94.
- 28 See Griffiths, *ibid.* (previous note), on Alcman fr. 1 PMG.
- 29 D.L. Page, *Sappho and Alcaeus* (Oxford 1959), 119–26: frs. 104–17, and perhaps 30, 31, 44 (Lobel-Page).
- 30 For the general term 'hymnos', see Fowler, *op. cit.*, 94–5.
- 31 Bowie, *JHS* 106 (1986), 13–35, esp. 27–34 generally; for Semonides, Souda iv.360. 7 with Bowie's discussion, p. 31. Xenophanes' poem may well have been in hexameters, but even if it were, the same milieu is likely.

- 32 See Bowie, *op. cit.*, for these occasions; also West, *Studies*, ch. 1.
- 33 Cf. the kitharode in *Hom. Hymn* IV 418–33; cf. Hdt. 1.23–4 (Arion).
- 34 Herington, *op. cit.* ch. 1, esp. 7–10.
- 35 For debate about choral or solo performance: M.Lefkowitz, ‘Who sang Pindar’s victory odes?’, *AJP* 109 (1988), 1–11; M.Heath, ‘Receiving the *κῶμος*: the context and performance of epinician’, *AJP* 109 (1988), 180–95; A.P.Burnett, ‘Performing Pindar’s odes’, *CP* 84 (1989), 283–93; C.Carey, ‘The performance of the victory ode’, *AJP* 110 (1989), 545–65.
- 36 For solo re-performance, Herington, *op. cit.* 28; J.Irigoin, *Histoire du texte de Pindare* (1952), 8–20; *Nem.* 4.13–16; *Ar. Clouds* 1355–8.
- 37 One collection is preserved: *PMG* 884–908.
- 38 *Symp.* 212, 213, 223b; West, *Studies*, 12; Heath, *op. cit.*
- 39 Bowie, *JHS* 106 (1986), 13–35; West, *Studies*.
- 40 D.B.Levine, ‘Symposium and the polis’, in *Theognis of Megara*, ed. T.J.Figueira and G. Nagy (1985), 176–96; e.g. *Theognis* 467–96, 563–6; also West, *Studies*, ch. 4.
- 41 See in general on the symposium: O.Murray (ed.), *Symptica. A Symposium on the Symposium* (Oxford, 1990); Murray, ‘The Greek symposium in history’, in *Tria Corda, Scritti...A.Momigliano* (Como, 1983), 257–92. On the problematic context of iambic verse, see West, *Studies*, ch. 2.
- 42 Philoch. *FGH* 328 F 216, ap. Athen. 630F.
- 43 Bowie, ‘Miles ludens? the problem of martial exhortation in early Greek elegy’, in Murray, *op. cit.*, 221–9, argues that symposia are an adequate context; cf. West, *Studies*, 10.
- 44 West, *Studies*, 10.
- 45 Cf. Bowie, *op. cit.* (*JHS* 1986), esp. 15–21; West, *Studies*, 10–14.
- 46 See Herington, *op. cit.* 33–5. Bowie’s argument (*JHS* 1986) about festivals is suggestive; he minimizes performance to citizens generally (18–19).
- 47 West suggests tentatively (*Studies*, 12), that they might be ‘literary publications of speeches actually delivered in prose’: but we still would wish to know where the resulting verse was performed.
- 48 West, *Studies*, 7: ‘It was not known by any collective name because it had no single occasion or function. In archaic Greece it was the occasion, not the metre, which conferred a name.’
- 49 Fowler, *op. cit.* ch. 3; citations from pp. 102–3. Cf. another theory, that elegy generally ‘amounts to a formal expression of the ideology of the polis’, Nagy, *Greek Mythology and Poetics* (1990), 270.
- 50 This may have varied with the occasion: see Herington, *op. cit.*, 38 for evidence that elegy might sometimes be accompanied by the lyre.
- 51 See Most, ‘Greek lyric poets’, 75–98; hence part of the difficulty in associating *elegy* with *polis* ideology (see n. 49).
- 52 Thomas, *op. cit.*, 114; cf. Plato, *Phaedr.* 267a.
- 53 Hermippus fr. 88 Wehrli=Athen. 619b (‘Athenians’ has occasionally been emended to ‘Catanians’).
- 54 Stob. IV 2. 24, 154–5 Hense; for further refs. to sung laws, see my forthcoming paper, ‘Written in stone?’, *BICS* 1995.
- 55 E.g. *Od.* 3.203–4 (fame and song for those to come), and below. *Kleos* and song are linked, but not inseparable (see below). For the Homeric phrase *kleos aphthiton*, see also Hesiod fr. 7–5 (MW); Sappho fr. 44. 4 (LP).
- 56 Segal, ‘Bard and audience’, 6–7; *Od.* 1.154, 21.430.

- 57 On which, see Walsh, op. cit., ch. 1; Segal, 'Bard and audience', 9–11. Cf. also *Theog.* 94–103.
- 58 See Goldhill, op. cit., 69–108; works on *kleos* in Homer are numerous: see also Redfield, op. cit. 32–5, 38; J.Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford, 1980), esp. 95–102; Segal, 'Kleos and its ironies in the *Odyssey*', *AC* 52 (1983), 22–47; M.Edwards, *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* (1987), 149–58; Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans*.
- 59 E.g. *Od.* 4.584 (tomb for Agamemnon, 'so that his *kleos* may be unquenchable'), 11.76 (Elpenor), 24.80–4 (Achilles); *Il.* 7.86–91, 22.300–5.
- 60 Despite (e.g.) Goldhill, op. cit., 100, 103 (which elide *kleos* for great deeds and *kleos* from song). Cf. the interesting remarks of Walsh on the Homeric poets' relation to truth, which may be connected: op. cit., ch. 1, esp. pp. 10–11, 20–1. J.Griffin, 'Homer and excess', in J.M.Bremer *et al.* (eds.), *Homer: Beyond Oral Poetry. Recent Trends in Homeric Interpretation* (Amsterdam, 1987), pp. 98–9, shows that there are still hints that the heroes' poetic immortality might actually be short: *Il.* 6.355–8 (Helen), 7.81–91 (Hector), 9.412–13 (Achilles). Note however the ironic reversal in the *Odyssey* where the epic songs themselves have *kleos*, *Od.* 1.351, 8.74: Redfield, op. cit., 37–8.
- 61 Cf. also *Il.* 1.1, the Muses sing the poem; and further, *Il.* 2.488–92, a superhuman task; Jensen has an interesting discussion, *The Homeric Question* (Copenhagen, 1980), 62–9, 79–80.
- 62 Detienne, *Les maîtres de vérité* (1967).
- 63 Redfield, op. cit. 35.
- 64 Goldhill, op. cit. ch. 2; cf. also West 'The rise of the Greek epic', *JHS* 108 (1988), 151–72, esp. 153, on the poet providing fame in the Indo-European tradition, citing (e.g.) *Od.* 24.196–8.
- 65 See Goldhill, op. cit. 109–16, for the sting in the tail.
- 66 Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise* (1991), 44 for interpretation of *ἐκόμισαν* as 'carry home'.
- 67 Cf. also *Nem.* 8.44–8, where the song itself is the marker stone (*sema*); *Theog.* 237ff. on the movement of song around Greece; Isoc. *Evag.* 73–4, similarly, compares statues and speeches; *Isthm.* 4.9–12 may employ a metaphor of the winds of song.
- 68 Hence the epinician may be seen as a grave offering: Kurke, op. cit., esp. ch. 3 on victory and its celebration as the 'perpetuation of funeral ritual and as the birth of an heir' (62)—e.g. *Isthm.* 4.21–4; *Isthm.* 7.16–24; *Ol.* 10.86–94. ; see also Ch. Segal, 'Messages to the Underworld: an aspect of poetic immortalization in Pindar', *AJP* 106 (1985), 199–212.
- 69 Cf. the particularly elaborate memorial of Phrasikleia, with Svenbro's discussion, *Phrasikleia* (Paris 1988), ch. 1.
- 70 See refs. at p. 114 and n. 59 above.
- 71 See Gentili, op. cit. 162.
- 72 See epitaphs in P.Friedländer, *Epigrammata. Greek Inscriptions in Verse from the Beginnings to the Persian Wars* (Berkeley, 1948); W.PEEK, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften*, vol. I (Berlin 1955; repr. Chicago, 1988); G.Pfohl, *Greek Poems on Stones*, vol. I (Leiden, 1967).
- 73 Friedländer (op. cit. n. 72) no. 33 (though note bland translation of *kleos*).
- 74 See on this *polis*-centred *kleos*, Goldhill, op. cit. 124ff.; cf. for later fifth-century Athens, N.Lorau, *The Invention of Athens* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), and

- R.Thomas, *Oral Tradition* (Cambridge, 1989), ch. 4; and on Tyrtaios, Jaeger, 'Tyrtaios on true virtue', in *Five Essays*, transl. A.Fiske (Montreal, 1966).
- 75 Not confined to late lyric, as suggested by Segal, 'Bard and audience', esp. 26–9.
- 76 A recent discussion of this question in Edmunds, 'The genre of Theognidean poetry' (1985), esp. 100ff., not entirely convincing: note Pigres fr. 1W, where the Muse possesses *sophie*; Theogn. 1055–6, 15–16; at Hesiod fr. 306 M-W, and *Hom. Hymn* 4.483, *sophie* refers to cithara-playing. See also West, *Hesiod, Works and Days* (1978), at l. 649; Woodbury, *Phoenix* 39 (1985), p. 200f. (Ibykos).
- 77 See, generally, H.I.Marrou, *History of Education in Antiquity* (London, 1956); W.Jaeger, *Paideia* (Oxford, 1945), vol. I.
- 78 Redfield, op. cit. 39 (until displaced by philosophers in the fourth century); Goldhill, op. cit. 116; cf. also Nagy, 'Theognis of Megara', in Figueira and Nagy, *Theognis*, 22–81, esp. 36ff.
- 79 *Preface to Plato* (Oxford, 1963).
- 80 S.Scully, 'The bard as custodian of Homeric society', *QUCC* 37 (1981), 67–83.
- 81 See esp. Redfield, Segal, and Goldhill cited in n. 58.
- 82 Fr. 11 DK; see further, Burkert, op. cit.
- 83 Irigoin, op. cit.
- 84 E.g. Plato, *Laws* 630a, with D.B.Levine, in Figueira and Nagy op. cit., App. 2.
- 85 E.g. Plato *Tim.* 21 b-c: Critias describes a (fictitious) episode in his youth when the boys in the festival of the Apatouria were chanting the songs of Solon.
- 86 See Pöhlmann 'Zur Überlieferung griechischer Literatur vom 8. bis zum 4. Jh.' (1990), mainly concerned with texts; Herington, op. cit., 31–9 and App. V, VII for evidence of later re-performance of monodic poets—note esp. the evidence from vases, in which Sappho and Anakreon figure frequently. Alkman, Sappho, Alkaios, Stesikhoros, Theognis, Anakreon, Simonides and Praxilla are attested as being performed in fifth-century Athenian symposia (p. 208).
- 87 Cf. Burkert, op. cit., on their propagation of Homer's poetry.
- 88 Fr. 348 (LP); cf. Page, op. cit. 239.
- 89 Arist. *Pol.* 1285a 33; cf. 1295a 16; see generally, A.Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London, 1956), Page, op. cit. part II.
- 90 Introduction, *Theognis of Megara*, ed. Figueira and Nagy (1985), 2.
- 91 V.Cobb-Stevens, and, rather differently, D.B.Levine, in Figueira and Nagy (eds.), *Theognis of Megara*, 159–75, and 176–96 respectively.
- 92 See Page, op. cit. 131.
- 93 D.L.IX 18 (=DK 21 A1) has been mistakenly interpreted as a sign that he was a rhapsode. Hence I disagree with Gentili, op. cit. 156–7.
- 94 Cf. Th.A.Tarkow, 'Tyrtaeus 9D: the role of poetry in the new Sparta', *AC* 52 (1983), 48–69; H.Shey, 'Tyrtaeus and the art of propaganda', *Arethusa* 9 (1976), 5–28.
- 95 Cf., rather differently, Nagy (op. cit.) in *Theognis of Megara*, esp. 36ff.
- 96 Op. cit. ch. 9.
- 97 L.Woodbury, 'Pindar and the mercenary Muse: *Isthm.* 2. 1–13', *TAPhA* 99 (1968), 527–42; S.Gzella, 'The fee in ancient Greek literature', *Eos* 49 (1971), 189–202; Gentili, op. cit. ch. 8.
- 98 As argued by Woodbury, op. cit. n. 97 above.

- 99 RE s.v.Ibykos: citing the paroemiographer Diogenianus, II 71 (cf. V 12) on the saying 'ἀρχαιότερος Ἴβύκου'
- 100 See esp. Kurke, op. cit., also (among others) Woodbury, 'Pindar and the mercenary muse'; Goldhill, op. cit. 130–7 (and refs. there).
- 101 Most, op. cit., sees a clear change in sixth-century poets, who no longer remain localized.
- 102 Cf. Gentili, op. cit. 155–7.
- 103 Gentili, op. cit. 160; cf. also Nagy, op. cit. 51 ff.

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THE GREEK NOVEL

Towards a sociology of production
and reception*J.R.Morgan*

It is easy to think of the novel as a modern invention, our one distinctively postclassical contribution to the family of literary genres. Aesthetically its formlessness and apparently infinite versatility seem the antithesis of classical control; and intellectually the mode of realism, both social and psychological, so long dominant in our fiction appears to substitute an interest in unique individuals in a world of concrete particularities for the classical instinct that the specifics of this world only mask the true reality of abstract universals.

Yet fictional narratives in prose did exist in Greek antiquity, and we might as well call them novels as anything else. To be honest, they have traditionally proved something of an embarrassment,¹ because they conform neither to our own preconceptions of what a 'serious' novel should be like nor to the canons by which we define the excellences of classical literature. Now that the post-modern revolution has undermined the realistic imperative, and we no longer demand our own novels to mirror the 'real world', the artificiality and conventionality of the Greek novels, indeed of any novel, can be enjoyed for their own sake without guilt. On their own terms these works can be seen to be more than shallow escapism (though that is not without interest); some of them at least are important works of literature, and are at last finding critical reappraisal.

The aim of this chapter, however, is not to explore individual texts, except as part of a wider argument, but to try to elucidate the phenomenon of the Greek novel as a whole. In so doing, I shall inevitably play down the individuality of each novel, and indulge in generalizations. I am well aware that there are many statements in this essay which cry out for qualification.

First of all, we must be clear what we mean by 'the Greek novel'. Not all fictions are novels. A novel must be free invention by a specific author; it must be acknowledged as fiction by both writer and reader; it must be of a certain length and complexity; and it must be literary.

There survive five works in ancient Greek which meet these criteria. In approximate order of composition they are: (i) *Khaireas and Kallirhoe* by Khariton; (ii) the *Ephesiaka* (*Ephesian Story*) by Xenophon of Ephesos; (iii) *Daphnis and Khloe* by Longus; (iv) *Leukippe and Kleitophon* by Achilleus Tatius; and (v) the *Aithiopika* (*Ethiopian Story*) by Heliodoros. In addition we possess the outlines of two further

novels, which were read and summarized by the ninth-century Byzantine patriarch, Photios: *The Wonders beyond Thule* by Antonius Diogenes, and the *Babyloniaka* (*Babylonian Story*) by Iamblikhos.² There are a few novels which we know by name only, and others which we know only from papyrus fragments. Over the last hundred years these fragments have expanded our knowledge of the form in a number of important ways. It is in fact a papyrus fragment which supplies us with the earliest known Greek novel, the so-called *Ninos Romance*, a handsome copy of which had become scrap paper by AD 101, when it was reused for compiling accounts. The copy cannot have been written much later than AD 50, and the work itself could have been composed a hundred years earlier. The latest of the extant novels is that of Heliodoros, estimates of whose date range from the early third to the late fourth century. Within this period, there is a distinct bulge of novel-writing and reading in the second century, though papyri show that novels were still being copied and read in the sixth century.³

The five extant novels form a tightly coherent corpus, with similar, not to say stereotyped, plots and thematic repertoires. The essence of the common scheme is that a supremely beautiful young woman and a supremely handsome young man meet and fall in love at first sight. Their bliss is interrupted, they are separated and launched into a series of adventures which take them all over the world. The nature of these adventures is fairly standard: shipwreck, encounters with pirates and brigands, wars, the apparent death of one or other of the protagonists, unwanted sexual attentions from various third parties. Through all vicissitudes hero and heroine remain true to each other, until at last they are reunited and live happily ever after in a state of wedded bliss which is never narrated.

Within this pattern variation is possible. Khariton and Xenophon have their lovers married before the adventures begin, whereas in the more sophisticated novels of Achilles and Heliodoros marriage is reserved to form the climax of the whole story. Separation can be handled differently: Xenophon's novel consists almost entirely of two quite separate narrative threads, while Iamblikhos seems to have kept his protagonists together and replaced physical separation with the emotional distance of an insane and homicidal jealousy. The balance of the two main themes of love and adventure can vary considerably: Antonius Diogenes relegated his romantic interest to subsidiary episodes, while Longus virtually removed the element of travel, substituting a process of emotional maturation. Narrative techniques differ, as does the degree of thematic unity imposed on the sequence of adventures. General ethical assumptions are also shared. Chastity is presented as a primary virtue, though with differing degrees of intensity. For Heliodoros it is an absolute imperative; Longus and Achilles both allow their hero to have sex with another woman. These variations are often the key to an author's intentions, but divergences can only be registered as such because there *is* a common basic scheme.

New discoveries modify but do not overturn this picture of generic homogeneity. We now know that alongside the ideal romance there existed fictions of overt sexuality and shock-horror sensationalism. We have fragments of ghost stories⁴, and funny stories in sleazy settings.⁵ Possibly the most intriguing discovery of all, the *Phoinikika* (*Phoenician Story*) by Lollianus, includes, within a couple of pages, the defloration of a man by a woman, group sex, human sacrifice, cannibalism, vomit, farting and

bandits in disguise. Here the point is not that the author was juggling with the familiar building blocks of the genre, but that he was giving his reader the thrill of flouting not just generic proprieties but all conventional notions of decency and good taste.⁶ To a large extent, of course, we are at the mercy of those who transmitted the texts from antiquity: chastity and seemly language were more acceptable to Byzantine Christians than semi-pornographic sexuality⁷ and pagan superstition. We do not know whether these marginal sub-types of fiction would originally have been felt as variations within an essentially unitary form, or as representatives of something completely different. Are we conceptualizing 'the Greek novel' correctly when we think in terms of the five canonical romances, or should we do better to envisage them as a restricted segment of a much broader spectrum of 'fiction' stretching away in paradoxography, aretology (religious miracle-stories), fictitious epistolography, jokes and pornography? There is a nexus of fundamental questions about the production and intended reception of these texts. What sort of person were they written by and for? Why and how were they read? Why did the canonical romance appear when and in the form it did?

A basic difficulty in attempting to answer questions like these is that the novel was seriously under-theorized in antiquity. There is no equivalent of Aristotle's *Poetics* for prose fiction, and no one ever took it upon himself to compile *Lives of the Novelists*. There is not even a word for 'novel' in ancient Greek, and the Byzantines were driven back to calling these works 'dramas' or 'histories'. The few references to novels that do exist are tantalizingly uncomplimentary. Macrobius, for instance, relegates the Latin novelists to the nursery—by which he means the mentally retarded (*Comm. in Somn. Scip.* 1.2.7). Philostratos (*Epist.* 66) dismisses Khariton—if indeed it was Khariton the novelist he had in mind—as a nobody who will be forgotten by posterity. It is difficult to believe that there ever was a serious critical interest which has vanished without trace.⁸ It is more likely that the whole exercise of writing and reading novels was somehow ambiguous, even ever so slightly illicit. An illuminating comment comes from the emperor Julian, writing in the fourth century. In a letter he sketches out a curriculum of reading for his reformed pagan clergy, and after recommending the study of history he says, 'but as for those fictions in the form of history that have been narrated alongside events of the past, we should renounce them, love stories and all that sort of stuff' (*Epist.* 89.301b).

Here Julian picks on the two salient features that rendered novels suspect: their erotic content, and their fictionality. At first sight Julian's comments might suggest that novels are indecent, but that is hardly borne out by the extant corpus. It is less a question of impropriety than of a value system which gave central importance to an aspect of life conventionally relegated to the margins. As a thoroughgoing classical revivalist, Julian subscribed to the view that love was a distraction from proper civic concerns. More important perhaps is the novel's status as fiction.⁹ Fiction troubled Greek thinkers from a very early stage. There was a persistent tendency among theorists to affect to make no distinction between fictions and lies. Nevertheless, realistic fiction was in practice tolerated in the plays of New Comedy. Julian's particular difficulty lay in the combination of fiction and prose, which carried an implicit claim to speak truth unmediated by the artifices of language. What offended him was not that the novels were fiction but that they felt as if they were somehow deceitfully

setting themselves up as vehicles of truth. He expresses this by calling them ‘fictions in the form of history’. As I understand his words, he sees them not just as trivia masquerading as something they are not, but as untruths seeking to infiltrate themselves into the historical record.

Julian is describing unsympathetically, but with some perceptiveness, what the very earliest novels actually do. The *Ninos Romance* has as its hero the eponymous founder of Nineveh, who was accepted as a real personage by Greek historians. There were several versions of his story, and comparison of the extant accounts shows that even within the nominally historical tradition a certain amount of adaptation and recasting took place.¹⁰ The romance associates itself with perceived history by describing in historiographically nuanced prose expeditions to Armenia and the Black Sea which are attested (though not given detailed treatment) by *bona fide* historians. At the same time it went far beyond the boundaries of legitimate historical reconstruction. The extant fragments depict the chaste romantic love of the young Ninos for his demure little cousin—none other than the formidable Semiramis of legend!—and show him pleading his suit to his auntie. Another fragment seems to contain the familiar incident of shipwreck and separation. The ingredients of romance are already there; the picture of the lovers is thoroughly sentimentalized and Hellenized, yet is still very deliberately tied to a specific setting in ‘real’ history.

This is not an isolated case. Khariton’s heroine is the daughter of the Syracusan statesman Hermokrates. Plutarch (*Dion* 3) mentions a daughter of Hermokrates as wife of the tyrant Dionysios, which just happens to be the name of the heroine’s second husband in the novel. The cast-list also includes the Persian king Artaxerxes, and the plot features an Egyptian rebellion from Persia which looks to be modelled on the revolt of 360 BC, with the fictional hero Khaireas somehow moonlighting as the Athenian general Khabrias.¹¹ In a strikingly similar fashion, the papyrus fragments known as *Parthenope* and *Metiokhos* play around the gaps in the history of Herodotus.¹² The hero was the son of Miltiades, fleeing from the machinations of his historical stepmother. The heroine is daughter of Polykrates of Samos and granddaughter of Kroisos. Anaximenes and Ibykos also appear, and there are indications from a later Persian reworking of the novel that the lovers were caught up in the intrigues of Maiandrios described by Herodotus. Another fragmentary novel centres on the Egyptian king Sesonchosis, and alongside historical references features a long-lost childhood sweetheart.¹³

This snuggling up to historical fact looks like a deliberate strategy on the part of novelists at a particular juncture in the form’s development, and it is worth asking what they thought they were gaining by it. However we choose to phrase the answer, it seems to me that they were angling for precisely the effect which Julian, from a hostile position, criticizes. Novels are literature without a practical purpose; their function is to provide pleasure through the means of vicarious emotional experience. Readers are enabled to participate imaginatively in situations outside their real lives, but all fiction straddles the paradox that it solicits a real response to a stimulus which the reader knows by definition to be unreal. An imaginative acceptance of the fictional world is a prerequisite, and that acceptance is facilitated if the fiction is accommodated to known reality.

At the same time the fact that it is in the very earliest novels that we find this

infiltration of history and that we know of no non-historical fiction predating the *Ninos Romance* suggests an unease with fiction as such, hardly surprising when it had no respectable literary tradition to sanction it. In an intellectual climate where doubts could be expressed about the moral legitimacy of writing fiction at all, there are broadly two defences open to the novelist. The first is to deny any intention to deceive, the second to pretend that he is not writing fiction at all. The historical nature of the early novels served to legitimize their very existence, a stratagem particularly effective in view of the fact that ancient historiography already acted on occasion as a receptacle for narrative which acknowledged the goal of pleasure above information. Historiography was being enlisted to provide fiction with the literary pedigree which, as a late arrival, it lacked.

This accommodation with history is only an outward pretence. Although it aimed to secure the reader's assent to the fiction, that assent was quite different from that demanded by genuine history. Khariton was not really trying to dupe his reader into believing that the plot of his novel was the factual truth; he was not really engaged in polluting history with lies. Alongside the historical pretence, there are plenty of knowing winks to remind the reader of his complicity in the game of fiction. The very opening of Khariton's novel combines mannerisms lifted from Herodotus and Thucydides with an acknowledgement that the subject matter is quite non-historical: 'My name is Khariton, of Aphrodisias, and I am clerk to the attorney Athenagoras. I am going to tell you the story of a love affair that took place in Syracuse' (1.1.1).

The protocols of reading involved are much subtler than a mere confusion of fact and fiction. As Perry saw so clearly, even the *Ninos Romance* is a novel, not terminally corrupt historiography.¹⁴ These texts do not imply a reader too naïve or stupid to discriminate truth and untruth, but one already acculturated to the fictional contract of giving, with a little prompting, imaginative belief to statements which he was perfectly aware were untrue outside the fiction.

The readership of these early novels is crucial to a proper understanding of them.¹⁵ To use uncongenial terminology, the novel was a product designed to meet a market demand. Unfortunately, the first novelists have not bequeathed us their market research, and, apart from a few suggestive items of external evidence, we have to infer the market and its perceived needs from the novels produced to satisfy them.

It is here that the much-discussed question of the origins of the novel can best be approached. Various answers have been offered, the least convincing of which are those which imply that the novel was just an accident waiting to happen, without any particular significance attached to where or when. Erwin Rohde's thesis that the romance was the mongrel offspring of Utopian *Reisefabulistik* and Alexandrian erotic narrative poetry is now generally rejected, as are other attempts to see the novels as the result of an *evolutionary* process from earlier literary forms, be they corrupt historiography, New Comedy, local aetiologies or rhetorical exercises. Graham Anderson's recent argument that the novels had been hanging around for millennia as ancient oriental stories, just waiting to be translated into Greek, is no more convincing.¹⁶

Rather more hopeful is the suggestion that the novel arose as a response to a whole new class of readership which emerged in the cosmopolitan conurbations of the Hellenistic world, a newly literate and relatively unsophisticated mass market

with a taste for the sentimental. On this view, the novel was by origin a genuinely popular form, supplying large sections of the population with literary entertainment in a society where communal forms of literature, notably the epic and the drama, were either inaccessible or moribund. The constituents of this new mass audience are described by Perry as ‘the poor in spirit’,¹⁷ and are seen as including the young, the bourgeoisie outside the traditional cultural elite, and, especially, women. On an intuitive level this approach has a lot to recommend it, not least because it reinforces the prejudices of many classicists about the quality of the Greek novel. But aside from its cargo of cultural assumptions, which need to be unpacked and inspected, there are difficulties in squaring it with the evidence, both external and internal.

To take the few items of external evidence first. Although none of the references to novels in ancient literature is enthusiastic, they do at least indicate that the existence of these works was known to members of the literary establishment, and Julian’s comments indicate that he saw novel-reading among those in higher education as a real possibility. None of these references links fiction with a lower class of readership with the possible exception of the well-known anecdote reported by Plutarch (*Crassus* 32) that a copy of Aristides’ *Milesiaka* (*Milesian Tales*) was discovered in the baggage of a Roman centurion after the battle of Carrhae, much to the disgust of the Parthian victors. However, this work, well known by ill repute though only a few isolated words survive, was not a novel so much as a loosely connected collection of bawdy stories. If one had to choose any work to illustrate moral depravity, this would be it. The function of the anecdote is more paradigmatic than factual, but even if we accept it as historical fact, we can scarcely take the readership of *Milesian Tales* as typical of that of the ideal romances, or even assume that Roman soldiers constituted the typical readership of *Milesian Tales*.

A more detailed sociological context is supplied by the papyrus fragments.¹⁸ It is an easy assumption that there was a lot of popular fiction circulating in the ancient world, which has not survived because it was in some sense sub-literary, its appeal confined to those beyond the cultural pale. However, although plenty of fragments have been identified and continue to turn up, in absolute terms their numbers are not all that great. The total number of novel fragments is dwarfed by those of the standard school authors, and even Thucydides scores as many as all fiction put together. It is interesting that relatively few novels are known from more than one ancient copy. Khariton and Achilleus Tatius are notable exceptions, and the *Ninos Romance* has turned up in two copies (always assuming that they do in fact come from the same work), as have Lollianus’ *Phoinikika* and the *Sesonchosis Romance*.¹⁹ Nevertheless, papyri hardly support the notion either of a massive readership or of a large population of fictional texts. The quality of the novel papyri is very variable. They include some very fine examples of book production, as well as some scruffy specimens on recycled papyrus, with a slight preponderance towards the lower end of the scale. The physical quality of the book does not correlate with the literary quality of the text, so far as we can judge it.²⁰ In this the fiction fragments are nothing unusual: physically there is nothing to discriminate them, as a corpus, from literary papyri at large. There is certainly no indication that these books were aimed down-market of ‘normal’ literature. There is an illuminating contrast with papyri of early Christian material, which *was* aimed at a level of readership outside the usual circles

of bookbuyers. Apart from the low quality of their papyrus and script, Christian books characteristically employed the codex, presumably because it was more economical in allowing the text to occupy both sides of the papyrus. Of the surviving novel papyri, only those of the *Phoinikika* derive from a codex.

Further evidence of a reader of novels comes from Syria, where two sites have yielded mosaic representations of scenes from novels, the *Ninos Romance* and *Parthenope and Metiokbos*.²¹ The so-called Villa of the Man of Letters at Daphne near Antioch had scenes from both of these works in its reception rooms. Whether or not the literati would have approved of his taste we cannot tell, but here was one very affluent man who was clearly not ashamed to be a reader of romantic fiction. And he was not isolated. His mosaic illustrating the *Ninos Romance* can only be recognized as such because there is another, almost identical, in nearby Alexandretta, in which Ninos is labelled with his name. The fact that the design was so standardized, with just a few compositional variants, suggests it was available 'off the peg' from local workshops, surely implying a persistent market for it among the wealthy, at least locally. Romance then was being read by those rich enough to own luxury villas.

So far as we can tell, the authors too derive from the more privileged and literate strata of society. There is admittedly a theoretical problem in assessing the evidence here, since the authorial persona projected in a fictional text should not be confused with the author in real life. Khariton presents himself at the beginning of his novel as the clerk (*hypographeus*) of the rhetor Athenagoras in Aphrodisias. We cannot be sure that this is genuine biographical information, although, I think, the balance of probability favours it. The name 'Khariton', formed from *kharis* ('grace' or 'charm'), seems almost too appropriate to an erotic novelist to be true, especially when coupled with an origin in Aphrodisias, city of the goddess of love. It is tempting to think that the real author is hiding behind a *nom de plume*, but the name 'Khariton' is epigraphically attested at Aphrodisias, although admittedly not for any individual who can be identified with the novelist.²² If we take the author's introduction at its face value, he was a man whose duties entailed a high degree of education and practical literacy. On the other hand, if 'Khariton' was a pseudonym, we have to ask first of all *why* a novelist should want to conceal his identity. The answer would have to be partly that novel-writing was an activity which was not universally regarded as appropriate for certain sorts of people. Once again the faint whiff of illicit pleasure hangs around the novel! But—and this applies equally whether the statement is true or untrue—there were solid gains to be had from the reader thinking of the author as a legal clerk. If not indicative of the very highest social echelons, the position denotes a man of intellectual standing and personal respectability. It simultaneously enhances the pretence that the fiction is not fiction at all ('a man like that would not tell an untruth') and excuses the reader's own involvement with such a text ('if it's OK for such a solid citizen to write this, then it's OK for me to read it').

'Xenophon of Ephesos', on the other hand, certainly is a pseudonym. The Souda mentions three separate erotic novelists by the name of Xenophon, which is two too many to be coincidence.²³ The use of this alias places these writers ostensibly in the tradition of the Athenian Xenophon. Again the inherent ambivalence of literary fiction provides an explanation. The historical pretence is maintained, but also an acknowledged classic is enlisted to provide a respectable pedigree for romance: if

the novel had any literary precursor, it would be Xenophon's fictionalized biography of Kyros the Great.

Iamblikhos apparently provided more autobiographical detail than any other novelist. Photios (10, p.32 Habrich) reports him as saying that he was a native Babylonian, who learned Greek later in life, but a marginal note in one of the manuscripts of Photios' work describes him as a Syrian who learned Babylonian from a tutor and later became a practising Greek rhetor; this tutor was a Parthian royal secretary sold into slavery after being captured by Trajan, presumably in the campaign of 115/16, and besides teaching the young Iamblikhos his language, he also imparted some genuine Babylonian tales, of which the *Babyloniaka* is one. The Souda records that Iamblikhos was a Syrian of slave descent. Attempts have been made to reconcile these three sources,²⁴ but it seems to me more likely that some at least of the information is fictitious. The Babylonian tutor in particular looks like a device to provide the fiction with provenance and authentication. Perhaps we should imagine that the main narrative was introduced by a framing *mise-en-scène* with the Babylonian tutor telling stories to the infant Iamblikhos; it may even be that the story was presented in the tutor's voice. Confusion between author and narrator would explain the disagreement over Iamblikhos' nationality.²⁵ But if the narrative was presented through a fictitious frame, then the ostensible autobiography would be part of that frame and not straightforward evidence for the author's life and status. The persona does not even represent public perceptions of what a novelist ought to be, so much as construct a line of transmission, plausible within the frame of the fiction, to facilitate the imaginative acceptance of the story. Perhaps the most interesting detail is that Iamblikhos parades his current status as sophist, as if to say that, whatever his ostensible past, he is now worthy of attention by educated readers.

Of Achilles Tatius we know very little. The Souda says he wrote also on astronomy and etymology, which suggests a literary generalist. Judging by his name, he looks like a Greek with Roman citizenship. The same applies to Antonius Diogenes; to Longus, who has been identified as a member of a family attested by inscriptions on Lesbos;²⁶ and even to the lurid Lollian, who has been identified, less plausibly, with the Ephesian sophist P.Hordeonius Lollianus.²⁷ These writers must have belonged to families of some importance. In the prologue to *Daphnis and Khloe* (praef. 1), Longus says that his novel is the exegesis of a painting which he saw while hunting on Lesbos. Again, this is not unmediated autobiography, but he is clearly portraying himself as a member of the leisured urban classes, thus aligning himself with the audience at which his particular brand of pastoral fantasy is directed.²⁸ Heliodoros (10.41.4) closes his novel with a colophon in which he identifies himself as a Phoenician from Emesa, a member of the Clan of Descendants of the Sun. Emesa was a centre of the Syrian Sun cult, so, whatever the exact import of Heliodoros' phraseology, whether or not he means he was a Heliac priest, he was apparently a member of the local aristocracy, claiming descent from the local deity.

All this suggests that, despite a certain playful ambivalence about the propriety of fiction, the novelists were not, and did not project themselves as, members of the seething masses. Neither they nor their books, as physical objects, are in any sense down-market of other literature. From the production side it is impossible to sustain

the view that the novel was a popular form aimed at a new market created by a downward spread in literacy.

Levels of literacy, of course, are the key to the consumption of the novel. Harris's recent study concludes that 'nothing like mass literacy ever came into being in antiquity'.²⁹ Without doubt literacy was more widely spread in the Hellenistic period, but we must be clear what 'literacy' means in this context and avoid assumptions based on analogies with modern societies where anything less than the ability to read fluently is thought of as illiteracy. Much of the increase in education during the Hellenistic period was at the elementary level. More people became literate in the purely functional sense: that is, they could read and write sufficiently to engage in commercial and civic activity. But signing your name on a document is a very different matter from settling down to read a long and complicated literary text. The novels we possess, all of them, imply fluent reading skills, and all the evidence suggests that such skills remained restricted to a minority of the population at large. Moreover, reading for pleasure (which is what novels are for) presupposes regular and protracted periods of leisure, a rare commodity in a pre-mechanical society. Books themselves were luxury items, representing a substantial investment of a copyist's time on the part of the book-trader. It is extremely difficult to determine the price of books, and many imponderables exist as to the extent to which they might circulate after purchase. In purely economic terms the ownership of books was open to many individuals, but culturally, Harris concludes, a certain social and political mystique continued to cling to the non-functional exercise of literacy, effectively limiting extensive book-owning and, implicitly, book-reading. The evidence from Oxyrhynchos suggests that many more homes possessed a copy of Homer than any other text. We should do better to think of the copy of the *Ninos Romance* as one item in a rich man's library than as the sole book in a less affluent or less literarily active menage. The fact that some of the papyrus fragments come from more cheaply produced books does not mean that they were owned by the less well-to-do. Even a wealthy man might choose a cheaper copy of a work he might well read only once, or, if he were an addict of romantic fiction, buy cheap copies of two novels rather than a luxury edition of one.

One particular point, to which we shall return, concerns the suggestion that novels were written for or even by women. We know of plenty of literate women, sometimes literate to a very high degree. Nevertheless, more men were literate than women, and to a higher average standard. Harris (op. cit., 330) estimates that in rural areas the rate of even functional literacy among women might be less than 5 per cent. The picture would no doubt be different in the major conurbations, where there was a flourishing educational establishment, especially among upper-class families, but we should beware of the assumption that there existed anywhere a female reading public of sufficient size to generate the creation and support the distribution of a literature targeted specifically at women. In fact, there is no hint in the ancient evidence that women who could read read anything different from men. Quite apart from the economics of the enterprise, it is doubtful that an exclusively female public would be capable of delivering the non-monetary rewards (such as social opportunity and recognition) which, in the absence of an effective system of copyright, provided important incentives for literary creation. As it happens, we know of no female

novelist, and though we might be inclined to think, on analogy with the Brontës perhaps, that she might have concealed her gender behind a male *nom de plume*, there were precedents in the ancient world, especially Sappho, for women as authors of erotic literature. We know of only one female reader of ancient novels. This is Isidora, the sister of Antonius Diogenes, to whom his novel was dedicated (Phot. *Bibl. cod.* 166, 111a 41ff.). Interestingly, this is the least ‘romantic’ of the novels we know of, and Isidora is the dedicatee not *qua* woman but as ‘lover of learning’. We should also note that Antonius’ dedication to Isidora was in some way (Photios is not clear here) coupled with a prefatory address to a man, Faustinus.

Now we must turn to that mythical entity which modern theorists call ‘the implied reader’. It is important to remember that this person is only a theoretical convenience. Books can always be read by people who do not constitute their intended audience and who may not understand all their strategies fully. Nevertheless, it is legitimate to argue from a text towards a definition of its centrally intended readership. Two prefatory comments may be in order. First, there is no *a priori* reason to assume that all the Greek novels were written for the same audience. Very clearly the readership was differentiated by period and by nationality. When Heliodoros wrote the *Aithiopika* perhaps nearly five hundred years had elapsed since the composition of the *Ninos Romance*. The world had moved on. Social, political and cultural, especially religious, changes had redefined the reading public and the grid of preconceptions through which they might approach the reading of a fiction. This is to say nothing of the internal dynamics of the genre’s own literary history, the ways in which later novelists built on the work of their predecessors and in so doing stretched or deflected accultured responses and expectations. Similarly, novels might be produced for local markets. It is difficult to be dogmatic about this, not least because the preservation and identification of papyrus fragments from Egypt is such a haphazard business. Nevertheless, it is striking that we have fragments from more than one copy of Khariton and Achilleus Tatius (according to the *Souda* a native of Alexandria), but none from the *Babyloniaka* of Iamblikhos (a Syrian), or from *Daphnis and Khloe* or the *Ephesiaka*,³⁰ and only one, very late, fragment of Heliodoros. Conversely, several of the fragments seem exclusively Egyptian in their orientation. The *Sesonchosis Romance* is an obvious example of a nationalist inspiration, and the *Phoinikika* of Lollianus is apparently related to events in Egypt towards the end of the second century.³¹ The interest in magic displayed by some fragments, together with a markedly high incidence of Egyptian names might well lead to the conclusion that there was a local production catering to local tastes.³² There is simply no way of telling how the profile of a similar corpus of fragments from elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean might have differed, but the sustained interest in the *Ninos Romance* around Antioch might indicate that this was also a locally specific work, although of course it did find its way to Egypt.

The second point is that we should be cautious about assuming a direct correlation between the quality of a work as literature and the standing of its intended audience. A book of apparent simplicity might provide elegant and relaxed reading for the highly literate, and an audience with little formal education might nonetheless be able to follow a complex plot, even in oral recitation,³³ and respond to, if not articulate, compositional subtleties such as thematic echoes.

Even with these provisos, it still seems clear to me that to derive the maximum pleasure from these novels an audience would need to possess a level of reading competence which could only come with prolonged and constant exposure to literature.

It is conventional now to divide the extant novels into two groups, on the basis of their relationship to the intellectual and cultural currents which can be loosely collected under the heading of the Second Sophistic. Notoriously difficult to define precisely, this movement was centred on the professional display rhetoricians or sophists, who flourished in an environment half way between university and theatre. Marked by acute awareness of the possibilities of language to entertain and dazzle, by conscious and quite unrepentant artificiality and by a tendency to value effect above deeper intellectual or artistic coherence, sophistic had as its characteristic product the epideictic oration. Finding its deliberative and forensic functions closed off by political changes, oratory turned instead to the past, the Hellenic heritage, to florid description and imaginary situations. The effect of these developments spilled over into other literature, including the novel.³⁴ Iamblikhos, for example, described himself as a sophist, and Philostratos (*Lives of the Sophists* 1.22.524) records an incident when a work called *Araspes and Pantheia*, which sounds as if it was a romantic novel, was maliciously circulated under the name of the sophist Dionysios of Miletos. A work produced in this ambience was bound to be more ambitious, more literary, more élitist, more self-aware. On this basis, Khariton and Xenophon are classed as pre-sophistic, while Achilleus, Longus and Heliodoros demonstrate clear sophistic influence. The distinction might be thought to correspond to a distinction in intended readership. It might well do so, but if it does the distinction is between elite and super-elite. In other words, even the 'pre-sophistic' novels presuppose a high level of literary culture.

Khariton tells his story simply and straightforwardly, but not ineffectively. As we have seen, he plunders history to provide himself with a credible milieu, an effect which would only work for a reader who already knew enough history to recognize the setting Khariton was purloining. This applies even more strongly to the fragmentary *Metiokhos and Parthenope*, which has, in fact, sometimes been attributed to Khariton.³⁵ Even his prose style, plain and informative, is arguably an imitation of that of the Athenian Xenophon. Like all the novelists he shows sufficient awareness of prose style systematically to avoid ugly juxtaposition of vowels and to phrase so as to produce preferred rhythmic patterns at the ends of clauses. Apart from the history, Khariton exploits a range of intertexts. He is especially given to quoting Homer, not just for decoration but so as to bring up relevant resonances and associations.³⁶ His reader, that is to say, is expected to know the Homeric texts intimately, not just to recognize a few parroted tags. He even alludes to the Aristotelian idea of tragic catharsis (8.1.4).

More interestingly, Khariton, although the earliest of the extant novelists, is already entered upon a critical dialectic with the tradition in which he was working. Let me illustrate this.

After his marriage to the heroine, Kallirhoe, the hero, Khaireas, is tricked into believing her unfaithful. In a fit of jealousy he kicks her, she swoons and is taken for dead. Without delay she is committed to the tomb, lest her beauty fade in the sight of men. Sure enough, she revives in the tomb, only to be kidnapped by grave-

robbers, who take her to Asia Minor and sell her to the local bigwig, Dionysios, who promptly falls in love with her (1.4–2.4). So far this is fairly predictable stuff, though with touches of an individual and sardonic sense of macabre humour in some of the invention. The reader who knows how this sort of story works can now settle down to enjoy a spirited defiance and defence of her chastity, leading to appalling sufferings. But no, Khariton has a surprise! Kallirhoe suddenly discovers that she is carrying Khaireas' child, and after a superbly handled scene of interior debate she decides to accept Dionysios' proposal of marriage for the sake of her foetus (2.8–11). Khariton has exploited the reader's expectations to produce a powerful individuation of his character. No other romantic heroine is a bigamist, but it is precisely at the moment of her deviance from generic conventions that Kallirhoe becomes emotionally and morally interesting. Likewise Dionysios is uneasily cast in the role of unwanted suitor. He is a man of sensitivity and pride, who fights a desperate internal battle between his desires and his sense of propriety. All this makes most sense on the assumption that Khariton is using his reader's knowledge of generic rules in order to examine the conventions of romance.

Xenophon's novel is, to be sure, rather more problematic, because we cannot be sure whether the text we have is the original or an epitome.³⁷ If it is an epitome, we cannot tell when or for whom it was made. Epitomes can take two forms: either an anthology of the best bits, or a uniform compression of the whole, with subsidiary material omitted. If it is either of these, our *Ephesiaka* is emphatically the second: possibly it was produced for a readership who found the original too demanding or too time-consuming. That would be an interesting example of a work being moved down-market to cater to a different readership, but also an indication that the novelists themselves did not compromise their material to make it an easy read for the culturally disadvantaged. On the other hand, if we have the text as the author wrote it, we may have a lower estimate of Xenophon's ability, but he is still clearly engaging in a dialogue with his tradition. There are places where he seems to be trying to go one better than Khariton, making miraculous rescues even more miraculous, dividing the sexual intrigue more equitably between his protagonists, experimenting with parallel narrations, even recycling some of Khariton's best moments, such as the heroine being entombed alive.³⁸ The otherwise gratuitous multiplication of incident also seems competitively intended. Xenophon was relying on his readers knowing other novels in order to appreciate his to the full. If it is correct to see Khariton as the specific model against whom he was measuring himself, there are implications about the size of the genre as a whole. It would be statistically unlikely for the two surviving pre-sophistic novels to be so closely related if there was originally a large number of similar works; the coincidence becomes less improbable as the population of comparable texts decreases.

Among the fragments it is worth noting that even a lurid little spook-story (P.Mich. inv.3378), with, it seems, a suicide returning from the grave to explain how he was hypnotized into killing himself by the ghost of a magician called Seueris, manages to quote Demosthenes. Even the literature of shlock-horror presupposed more than basic literacy.

These non-sophistic novels existed essentially to tell stories. The same is not true of the sophistic romances. Although their implied reader was certainly being invited

to enjoy an exciting read, other levels of engagement were being solicited as well, and it is arguably precisely in their demands that the reader theorize about the status of a fictional text that these works are differentiated from their pre-sophistic cousins.

Longus, for example, sets his story in the world of Theocritean pastoral, constructed out of allusions to the pastoral poets.³⁹ Not only must the reader recognize quite abstruse references and the modulation of pastoral into narrative, but he is also expected to respond to the interplay of the two genres. For instance, there is a tension between the pastoral innocence and spontaneity of the two young protagonists and the romantic imperative that Khloe's virginity must be preserved. Longus exploits this by making his story into one of the discovery of the name and deeds of love. In so doing, he exposes both the sterility of bucolic innocence and the psychological stasis of conventional romance. The travels and searches of the canonical romance are converted into an inner journey towards knowledge and maturity. At the same time, the tale of developing love is harmonized with the seasons, so that the instinctive attraction of the protagonists can be allegorically identified with the principle of growth and rebirth underlying the whole natural world.⁴⁰

Simultaneously Longus is provoking his reader into meditating on questions of reality. The pastoral idyll is ironically befouled from time to time with reminders of the brutishness of real country life. Urban intruders into the magic realm not only focus an ethical antithesis of urban and rural values, but also mirror the way in which the reader engages with the literary text, drawing attention to the need for wishfulfilment that motivates the reading of fiction. The thematics of the story revolve around the twin poles of nature and art, mediated through imitation. Thus the insufficiency of natural impulse in the protagonists is mirrored in symbolical gardens where nature and art combine to transcend themselves. The narrative itself is presented as the imitation of a painting, itself an artistic representation of lived experience; Longus recurrently uses this elaborate protocol to pose questions about the relationship of art to reality, fiction to experience.⁴¹

All this just scrapes the surface of a text of consummate complexity. I do not want to attempt an exhaustive reading here, merely to illustrate the point that the work aims high, aims at an audience who know about allegory, who are interested in the aesthetics of appearance and reality, and literary theory.⁴² These are all subjects endemic to the Second Sophistic.

Similarly Achilleus Tatius gives us a narrative which is more than it seems. Appearance and reality provide his central thematic, a preoccupation seen most clearly in the grotesquely iconic scene where the heroine is ritually disembowelled in full view of the hero, and her entrails cooked and eaten by a gang of cannibalistic bandits (3.15). Incredibly she survives, as we know she must. We learn later that what seemed to be her belly was a bladder full of sheep's guts, what seemed to be a sacrificial knife was a theatrical prop with a retractable blade, and what seemed to be devilish bandits were the hero's best friends in disguise. Fiction's power to reverse the irreversible, to make the impossible possible is celebrated, but its status relative to reality is problematized. Achilleus conducts a prolonged guerrilla war against the conventions of his own genre. His protagonists would be only too happy not to keep their virginity intact, and do so only because the heroine's mother intervenes at the crucial moment, following a nightmare in which she saw a man with a blade

slicing her daughter open.⁴³ Later, believing his beloved Leukippe dead, the hero Kleitophon drifts into marriage with a Widow of Ephesos (an obvious allusion to the Widow of Ephesos figure of the Milesian Tale), but does not consummate the marriage until he discovers that the widow's husband is not dead after all, and that Leukippe's death (by beheading this time) was another trick of appearances. These jokey reversals only work if the reader is conversant with generic convention; and apart from their immediate hilarity they are intended to call those conventions into critical scrutiny.

Achilleus also departs from the norm by using a first-person narrator. This is more than technical virtuosity, since it allows the author to open up a gap between the perceptions of his hero-narrator and the reality of the events he narrates. Thus he can present Kleitophon as a self-deluding romanticist, forever trying to live his life as if it were the plot of a novel, forever casting himself in the role of lover-hero, for which his total self-absorption, insensitivity, passivity and cowardice render him quite unfit. Once again fiction is being employed to probe beneath its own surface.

Similar analyses could be made of Heliodoros, who assigns a crucial section of the story to a devious and artful secondary narrator, whose withholding of vital information reflects the structural principle of the whole work. The inset narrator is complemented by an inset audience, enabling the reception of the novel to be enacted within it.⁴⁴ Or of Antonius Diogenes, who constructed a distinctly hyperbolic apparatus of authentication, introducing the primary narrative with no fewer than five frames of various kinds. In combining this with quasi-encyclopaedic citation of sources, Antonius juxtaposed fictional and factual modes of authentication. His novel was set on the island of Thule, the meeting point of cartographic reality and fantasy, and consisted of a heady cocktail of paradoxography (that which is strange but true) and magic fantasy (that which is too strange to be true). Despite the limitations of Photios' summary, it looks very much as if this was another fiction thematically concerned with questions of its own status. In this case, the destabilization of truth-reference may have served a mystical Pythagorean vision that sought to deprivilege concrete reality in favour of a non-material truth beyond the limits of the corporeal world.⁴⁵

What I am arguing is that in the course of its development the novel came to demand of its readers a degree of sophisticated self-awareness and reflexivity that would have restricted full appreciation to those with a high level of literary training. That the intellectual classes picked up the novel and ran with it suggests that they had been its readers all along. This is not to say that those earlier novels could not be enjoyed by others as well, so much so that there seems not to have been a sufficient groundswell of popular demand to sustain the production of simpler novels when the genre moved into its sophistic phase. Significantly, Khariton's novel remained in circulation, as papyri attest: possibly the residual demand for simpler fiction was small enough to be satisfied by texts that already existed.

These arguments point to the conclusion that the novel-reading public was not an entity distinct from the rest of the reading public, and that novels are better regarded as off-duty amusement for the highly literate than as a product aimed at those with lower grades of taste and education.

It remains to speculate why the conventions and restricted thematic range of the novels took quite the form they did and why they remained so potent. The stereotyped

plots of the novels were not, we can be sure, the result of a failure of invention on the part of the novelists. These people were giving the market what it wanted and clearly had a winning formula. If the novels do not deviate far from a relatively small cluster of themes and structures, it was because those themes and structures answered very closely to the needs, albeit unarticulated, of their public. In meeting these needs novels gave the pleasure which was the conscious motive for reading them. We must look for social forces shaping the genre, through the mechanism of the market.

Romance is very much the literature of the individual. These stories all have individual heroes and heroines whose experiences are non-social. The resolving climax is always the union of individual man with individual woman, and happy endings are such for individuals not for communities. For the most part the communities which the heroes leave and to which they ultimately return remain static and therefore not subject to narration. The adventure sections of the plots focus on individual experience. There is a distinct tendency for negative forces to be personified, often in marginal or barbarian figures. Where a political backdrop of sorts is supplied to provide a realistic setting, it is subordinated to the personal imperatives of romance. So, in Khariton, the democratic assembly of Syracuse meets, but its only agenda is the marriage of Khaireas and Kallirhoe (1.1.11).

This focus on the individual must be the mark of a cultural environment where the individual was emphasized above the collective. Communal forms of literature, like the epic and the drama, deal with themes and issues relevant to the community and its values. The novel, on the other hand, is a product for a fragmented and depoliticized readership, to be taken away and consumed in the privacy of one's own home. The values and emotions in which it deals are private, not civic. There must be a direct correlation between the conditions of reading and the contents of reading: the structures of the reader's life determine what he will find meaningful and pleasurable in literature. This increasing privateness is partly an inevitable consequence of a more sophisticated literacy among those sections of the population capable of reading to a more than functional level, but it is also the product of political conditions. It is no accident that the novel developed in the Hellenistic not the classical period. The classical *polis* was a functioning political unity subsuming its constituent individuals. The situation was very different in the centralized superstates of the Greek world after the death of Alexander the Great. Real power lay in the hands of remote kings who relied on military power rather than civic consensus. Much of the rhythm of civic life was reduced to formal ceremonial. At the same time, new opportunities for trade generated by the expansion of the Greek world led to the emergence of a wealthy merchant class, a bourgeoisie, whose acquisition of culture diluted traditions of civic allegiance and obligation among those with full access to literature.

The novels offer a focus of identification through which readers experience vicariously what the protagonists experience directly. The central fictional characters are engineered as role models, embodiments of the individual's aspirations. They are Greek, upper-class, cultured; not so far above our putative reader as to be alien to him, nor yet a reflection of his daily reality. Through their social and personal attributes they offer him the thrill of being for a while in imagination what he would most like to be in life.

This clearly applies to the heroines as much as to the heroes. In many novels the woman is more prominent and more active than her partner. This, together with the sentimental importance attached to reciprocity in love (and, it must be said, a degree of prejudice about the quality of 'women's literature'), has often led to the conclusion that the novels were written for a female readership. We have already seen that there are difficulties in this view from the production side, and it is just as problematic when we consider the intended reception of these texts. At a very subjective level, it seems to me that the active and resourceful woman is a figure of male rather than female fantasy. It is easier to desire Heliodoros' Kharikleia than to empathize with her. Equally the recurrent figure of the sensual 'other woman' (like Arsake in Heliodoros or Melite in Achilleus Tatius) allows the male reader to indulge the twin fantasies of sexual anticipation and moral rectitude. Brigitte Egger's methodical study of the role of women in the novels casts doubt on the hypothesis of the implied woman reader.⁴⁶ Fictional heroines enjoy less freedom and fewer rights than women in the real world. Heroines are empowered only by those characteristics which make them desirable to men, and their ultimate objective is to enter into a relationship of permanent legal subordination. This is a subtle male strategy for making the female interesting but ultimately not dangerous. It is, of course, a gender stereotype which many women demonstrably find satisfying as well, since it gives them power without effort or obligation. The Greek novel could afford pleasure to both sexes, although its implied readers were primarily male. The colourless heroes are perhaps blank screens onto which the reader can project himself more easily than on to a more individualized character.

Together with identification, the novels offer compensation, in both the adventure and the romantic sections. The adventures provide an excitement that reality lacks; hence the penchant for taking the action to exotic locations. For most of the Hellenistic period and virtually all of the Roman, the urban bourgeoisie enjoyed an unprecedented security and material prosperity. Dangers existed, of course, which are often reflected in the repetitive adventures of the novels. Piracy and shipwreck did occur in real life. The point is that the experiences of the fictional characters must severally remain within the bounds of credibility, so as to be within reach of the reader's imagination, but in their relentless accumulation they go far beyond what could conceivably befall any one person. The impression that the elements of travel and adventure in the novels are a sort of literary theme-park is reinforced by the fact they occur outside real time.⁴⁷ The protagonists neither age nor change, and in the end simply resume their lives from where they left off. All this looks like an outlet for a readership whose lives had settled into a comfortable but boring routine, which they had no desire to change but could supplement imaginatively. It is significant too that the novels are mostly set in the glorious Hellenic past, enabling the reader to recapture a sense of meaningful Greekness in a world of foreign rulers.

Much the same applies to the reciprocal, all-consuming love.⁴⁸ The novel was innovative in the importance it affords to erotic themes, elevating love to the supreme value in human life. Even in New Comedy, other concerns, such as the family and civic standing, share the stage with the erotic. The novels' celebration of marriage as the pinnacle of human existence reflects a historical movement away from the pederasty of the classical *polis* towards private domesticity.⁴⁹ At a deeper level, romantic

love is a projected fantasy of personal integration, growing more potent at a period when the weakening of the social nexus was eroding a man's sense of identity. Romance is an aggressive assertion of selfhood. However, its ideals are seldom achieved with any permanence in real life. The perfection of the end of a novel atones for the compromises and shortfalls of our own emotional life, and simultaneously offers the chance to make a new commitment to a system of moral and affective values which most people would endorse without ever attempting to emulate. The regularity with which the protagonists fall in love at first sight is part of this yearning for perfection. Here the point is to avoid the messiness and equivocations of psychological development.

These fantasies of danger and passion supply a dimension of experience absent from the daily routine of a materially prosperous and secure readership. But, as our experience in the late twentieth century teaches all too clearly, material prosperity has a way of coexisting with a deep spiritual unease and loss of direction. For urban man in the Hellenistic world, deprived of the intimate civic structures which gave his counterpart in the classical city-state a sense of place and purpose, life could easily appear random and meaningless. Significantly, it was at this very time that the goddess of Chance, Tykhe, was anthropomorphized and began to be worshipped. The recurrent novel-plot answers to this condition also by offering a myth of integration and signification.⁵⁰ Like many myths it is capable of serving different functions at different levels simultaneously.

Individually the episodes of danger and ordeals offer innocent thrills of fear and excitement to a bored readership, but as a sequence these unpleasant and frightening experiences are connected by external contingencies rather than by the protagonists' volition. They enact a world-view in which the individual has no control over his own destiny and is reduced to the nobly suffering victim of an implicitly hostile universe. In this sense, the physical sufferings of the heroes symbolize, in a dramatically displaced form, Everyman's sense of his own spiritual powerlessness. In part they are redeemed by love, which offers a new point of fixity in a shifting universe, located in another, equally lonely individual. But whereas the real world is out of control and its ending uncertain, a novel is formed by a shaping intelligence (that of the author, often figured within the frame by divine governance), working within defined parameters (the genre). One reason why the stereotyped plot was so successful was precisely that it was stereotyped, that despite the thrills and suspense of the journey one could be sure of the right ending. Certainty in fiction compensates for the uncertainty of life.

The happy ending has a profounder function than mere consolation, however. Although in the midst of their sufferings the protagonists cannot perceive the direction of their lives and feel themselves the victims of random or even malicious powers, ultimately they reach a point where in retrospect they can see a purpose. Suffering becomes meaningful, either as preparation for a final happiness so perfect and permanent that narrative cannot get a grip on it ('they lived happily ever after'); or as one side in a cosmic confrontation between good and evil which good is bound to win. Although this is a picture not of life but of life as it should be, the world of the novels is close enough to reality to allow imaginative transference to take place. If the real world seems meaningless, there is, in imagination but not so very far away, another, fictional, dispensation where things do make sense.

The kind of sense that the novels offer is far from the tragic insights of the classical period. The optimism of the Athenian democracy could accommodate the cruel truths of tragedy, but social and political changes made the tragic vision intolerable. The need now was for spiritual comfort, and that is what the novels offered. The powerlessness of the individual cut loose in a world enlarged beyond his conception is mirrored in the essential passivity of romantic hero and heroine. They exist to suffer; they cannot earn their own salvation, they can only endure and trust the system to take care of them.

So the novel offers a myth that answers the needs of Hellenistic man. If they were aimed not at the whole population but at a cultural élite, that is because even the élite was not immune to the anxieties of the new world and its enforced individualism. The novel was not the only product aimed at this market. New religions made offers of personal redemption through faith and observance, of an afterlife that compensated for the inequalities of this world, of a teleological platform from which a man could see the purpose and patterns of his own life. Connections have been made between these mystery religions and the novel. Reinhold Merkelbach, for example, read the novels as narrative encodings of the initiation liturgies of various cults.⁵¹ I think this is too specific. To me the undeniable similarities between religion and fiction look more like independent responses to the same stimulus. But religion offered a message not restricted to the few. One of the reasons for the success of Christianity was its ability to reach the whole population, especially those disadvantaged by class or gender. Religious belief is different from belief in a fiction: it does not stop when the text stops. By comparison the novels offer cold comfort. Although they afford an opportunity to enter a better world in the imagination, they simultaneously assert their status as fiction, and their ambiguities compound themselves as they become more sophisticated. They recognize the spiritual needs of their readers only to deny the reality of their own solutions, not least by the fact that at the end the reader is compelled to close the book and face the world again. In this sense, the inherent ambiguity of fiction is antithetical to the certainties of religion, which it cannot help but deconstruct. It would be a mistake to think the Greek novel offered easy escapism.

NOTES

- 1 Cf. S.A.Naber, *Mnemosyne* 1 (1873), 146: 'in hoc scriptionis genere longe longeque veteres superamus et miseret nos Graecos videre tam putide delirantes.' Or G.Schmeling, *Xenophon of Ephesus* (Boston, 1980), 9: 'I confess that I cannot say with conviction that Xenophon or any other ancient Greek novelist is worth reading.' Even the most learned book on the subject, Erwin Rohde's *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* (3rd edn, Leipzig, 1914), expresses contempt for the novels.
- 2 All these novels, together with the most important fragments, are translated in B.P. Reardon (ed.), *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley, 1989). I omit from this list two fictional narratives by Lucian: the *True History*, which is a satire on fanciful historians rather than a novel; and *The Ass*, which is a comic short story excerpted from a larger collection of tales.
- 3 The famous Codex Thebanus Deperditus, a selection of leaves from a parchment

- codex containing Khariton's novel and the so-called *Chione Romance*, dated from the sixth or seventh century. It was destroyed by fire before it could be properly studied; see U.Wilcken, 'Eine neue Roman-Handschrift', *APF* 1 (1901), 227–72. A sixth-century fragment of Heliodoros is published by M.Gronewald in *ZPE* 34 (1979), 19–21.
- 4 For example, P.Mich.inv.5 (=Pack² 2636); on which see A.Stramaglia, *ZPE* 88 (1991), 73–86; P.Mich.inv.3378 (=Pack² 2629), on which see S.West, *ZPE* 51 (1983), 55–8, and A.Stramaglia *ZPE* 84 (1990), 19–26; P.Oxy.1368 (=Pack² 2620), recently identified as a fragment of Lollianus' *Phoinikika*.
 - 5 For example P.Oxy.3010, the so-called *Iolaos Romance*, which seems to involve someone posing as a eunuch priest to get near a girl; P.Turner 8, the *Tinouphis Romance*, involves adultery and skulduggery by a hangman.
 - 6 The fragments of Lollianus are published with extensive discussion by A.Henrichs, *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos. Fragmente eines neuen griechischen Romans* (=Papyrologische Texte und Abhandlungen 14) (Bonn, 1972).
 - 7 One is intrigued for instance by the lost nineteen books of the *Rhodiaka* by Philippos of Amphipolis, described by the Souda as 'very dirty indeed', and prescribed, along with Iamblikhos' *Babyloniaka* and the work of an otherwise unknown Herodianus, by the fifth-century physician Theodorus Priscianus as a cure for impotence.
 - 8 For a qualification of this view see E.L.Bowie, 'The readership of Greek novels in the ancient world', in J.Tatum (ed.), *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (Baltimore and London, 1994) 435–59, who argues that the critical neglect can be partially explained by the accidents of survival of ancient critical works, and by the fact that the novel happened to come into being at a time when critical thought had ossified along lines laid down by Alexandrian scholarship.
 - 9 For a more detailed treatment of this see my paper 'Make-believe and make believe: the fictionality of the Greek novels', in C.Gill and T.P.Wiseman (eds), *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* (Exeter, 1992) 175–229; and B.P.Reardon, *The Form of Greek Romance* (Princeton, 1991), 46ff.
 - 10 On the *Ninos Romance* see R.Kussl, *Papyrusfragmente griechischer Romane* (=Classica Monacensia 2) (Tübingen, 1991), 84ff.
 - 11 For Khariton and history see W.Bartsch, *Der Charitonroman und die Historiographie* (Leipzig, 1934); P.Salmon, 'Chariton d'Aphrodisias et la révolte égyptienne de 360 avant J.-C.', *Chronique d'Égypte* 36 (1961) 365–76; F.Zimmermann, 'Chariton und die Geschichte', in *Sozialökonomische Verhältnisse im alten Orient und im klassischen Altertum* (Berlin, 1961), 329–45; K.Plepelits, *Chariton von Aphrodisias. Kallirhoe* (= Bibliothek der griechischen Literatur 6) (Stuttgart, 1976), 9ff.
 - 12 On these fragments see H.Maehler, 'Der Metiochos-Parthenope Roman', *ZPE* 23 (1976), 1–20; T.Hägg, 'Metiochos at Polycrates' court', *Eranos* 83 (1985), 92–102.
 - 13 See especially S.West's publication of P.Oxy.3319 in *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, vol. 47 (London, 1980), 11–19; and the reconstructions by J.N.O'Sullivan and W.A.Beck, *ZPE* 45 (1982), 71–83; and J.N.O'Sullivan, *ZPE* 56 (1984), 39–44.
 - 14 B.E.Perry, *The Ancient Romances* (=Sather Classical Lectures 37) (Berkeley, 1967), 66ff., 174ff.
 - 15 On the question of readership see now B.Wesseling 'The audience of the ancient novel', *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel* 1 (1988) 33–79; K.Treu, 'Der antike Roman und sein Publikum', in H.Kuch (ed.), *Der antike Roman* (Berlin, 1989), 178–97.

- 16 G.Anderson, *Ancient Fiction* (London, 1984). The best rebuttal of this approach is still Perry's *The Ancient Romances*; see too B.P.Reardon, *The Form of Greek Romance*, 169ff.
- 17 *The Ancient Romances*, vii. His view is followed by Reardon; see also Schmeling's *Xenophon of Ephesus*, 131ff.
- 18 These fragments are gathered and discussed by S.A.Stephens and J.J.Winkler, *Ancient Greek Novels: the Fragments* (Princeton, 1994). Some conclusions on the sociology they reveal are previewed by S.A.Stephens, 'Who read ancient novels?' in J.Tatum (ed.), *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, 405–18.
- 19 Khariton: P.Oxy. 1019+2948, P.Michael. 1, P.Fayum. 1 and Wilcken's lost codex; Achilleus: P.Oxy. 1014, P.Oxy. 1250, P.Mil.Vogl. 124, P.Schub. 30, P.Rob.inv. 35+P.Colon. 901, P.Oxy. 3836; *Ninos Romance*: P.Berol. 6926+P.Gen. 85, PSI 1305; Lollianus: P.Colon. 3328, P.Oxy. 1368; *Sesonchosis Romance*: P.Oxy. 1826, P.Oxy. 2466+3319.
- 20 Thus perhaps the most sophistic of the fragments, the so-called *Herpyllis Romance* (P.Dubl.inv.c. 3) is written on the verso of a financial document, whereas the ghost story P.Mich.inv. 3378 merited new papyrus and a high standard of script.
- 21 On these mosaics, see D.Levi, 'The novel of Ninus and Semiramis', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 87 (1944) 420–8; id. *Antioch Mosaic Pavements* (Princeton, 1947), vol.1, 117–19; Maehler, 'Der Metiochos-Parthenope Roman'.
- 22 CIG 2846; Athenagoras is also attested at Aphrodisias: CIG 2748, 2782, 2783.
- 23 Apart from Xenophon of Ephesus, these are Xenophon of Cyprus, whose *Kypriaka* is described as 'another erotic history', and Xenophon of Antioch, whose *Babyloniaka* is possibly to be identified with the *Ninos Romance*, following L.Levi, 'Sui frammenti del Romanzo di Nino', *RFIC* 1 (1895), 1–22.
- 24 Most recently by L.di Gregorio, 'Sulla biografia di Giamblico e la fortuna del suo romanzo attraverso i secoli', *Aevum* 38 (1964), 1–13.
- 25 Photios demonstrates exactly such confusion between narrator and author in the case of the work he calls the *Metamorphoseis* by Lucius of Patrai; we can see from Apuleius' independent Latin reworking of the same story that Lucius was narrator.
- 26 Cf. C.Cichorius, *Römische Studien* (Leipzig, 1922), 323.
- 27 This possibility was raised but rejected by Henrichs, *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos*, but is supported by C.P.Jones, 'Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and Lollianus' *Phoinikika*', *Phoenix* 34 (1980), 243–54.
- 28 See B.Effe, 'Longos. Zur Funktionsgeschichte der Bukolik in der römischen Kaiserzeit', *Hermes* 110 (1982), 65–84; T.A.Pandiri, 'Daphnis and Chloe: the art of pastoral play', *Ramus* 14 (1985), 116–41.
- 29 W.V.Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1989), 327.
- 30 It has been suggested that PSI 726, the so-called *Antheia Romance*, derives from the lost original of the *Ephesiaka* (cf. R.M.Rattenbury, 'Romance: traces of lost novels', in J.U. Powell (ed.), *New Chapters in the History of Greek Literature*, 3rd Series (Oxford, 1933), 247–8. Beyond the fact that a couple of names in the fragment are also borne by characters in Xenophon's novel, there is no support for this suggestion, and the situation revealed in the papyrus, though obscure, corresponds to nothing in the *Ephesiaka*.
- 31 The rebellion of the Boukoloi of the Nile delta in 172 was also said to have involved cannibalism by outlaws (Dio Cass. 71.4). The historicity of this is questionable; see J.J.Winkler, 'Lollianos and the desperadoes', *JHS* 100 (1980)

- 155–81; but such stones were clearly in the air, and Lollianus was cashing in on them.
- 32 J.W.B.Barns, 'Egypt and the Greek romance', *Akten des VIII Int.Kongr.für Papyrologie, Mitteilungen aus der Papyrussammlung der österreichischen Nationalbibliothek* 5 (1956), 34, n. 20, suggests that P.Mich.inv. 5 and P.Mich.inv. 3378 are translations of demotic Egyptian stories. One does not need to go so far to accept that they have a definite local ambience.
 - 33 In fact the only public reading of a novel that we know of is very much later, and not popular. A Byzantine piece of criticism, transmitted under the name of Philippos the Philosopher, but attributed to the eleventh-century writer Theophanes Kerameus by A.Colonna, reports an open-air reading and discussion of Heliodoros. See Colonna's edition of Heliodoros (Rome, 1938), 366–70. Perhaps the owner of the Villa of the Man of Letters at Daphne used the rooms with mosaics illustrating novels to hold readings from romances for his guests.
 - 34 See G.Anderson, *The Second Sophistic* (London, 1993) 156–70; B.P.Reardon, 'The Second Sophistic and the novel', in G.W.Bowersock (ed.), *Approaches to the Second Sophistic* (University Park, Pennsylvania, 1974), 23–9. S.Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel* (Princeton, 1989) examines the function of sophistic description (*ekphrasis*) in the novels of Achilleus and Heliodoros. On the importance of the Hellenic heritage in the sophistic movement see E.L.Bowie, 'The Greeks and their past in the Second Sophistic', *P&P* 46 (1970), 3–41.
 - 35 First by T.Hägg, 'The Parthenope romance decapitated?', *SO* 59 (1984), 61–92.
 - 36 See C.W.Müller, 'Chariton von Aphrodisias und die Theorie des Romans in der Antike', *Antike und Abendland* 22 (1976), 115–36.
 - 37 Our version of the novel is in five books, but the Souda refers to it as a work in ten; this is not conclusive, since there is a similar discrepancy in the case of Iamblikhos' novel, which the Souda says was in 39 books whereas Photios' obviously complete text was in sixteen. Otherwise it is a matter of probabilities whether Xenophon's sparse narrative style and apparent omissions are the result of compression or incompetence. For epitomization see K.Bürger, 'Zu Xenophon von Ephesos', *Hermes* 27 (1892), 36–67; against, T.Hägg, 'Die *Ephesiaka* des Xenophon Ephesios—Original oder Epitome?', *C&M* 27 (1966), 118–61.
 - 38 On the relationship between these two authors, see H.Gärtner, 'Xenophon von Ephesos', *RE Suppl.* IXA,2, 2055–89; A.Papanikolaou, 'Chariton und Xenophon von Ephesos. Zur Frage der Abhängigkeit', most easily accessible in H.Gärtner (ed.), *Beiträge zum griechischen Liebesroman* (Hildesheim, 1984), 279–84.
 - 39 This aspect of Longus' work has been much studied. See G.Rohde, 'Longus und die Bukolik', *RbM* 86 (1937), 23–49; M.C.Mittelstadt, 'Longus: *Daphnis and Chloë* and the pastoral tradition', *C&M* 27 (1966), 162–77; id. 'Bucolic-lyric motifs and dramatic narrative in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloë*', *RbM* 113 (1970), 211–27; A.M.Scarcella, 'La tecnica dell'imitazione in Longo Sofista', *GIF* 23 (1971), 34–59; L.R.Cresci, 'Il romanzo di Longo Sofista e la tradizione bucolica', *Atene e Roma* 26 (1981), 1–25; R.L.Hunter, *A Study of Daphnis and Chloë* (Cambridge, 1983), 16–58.
 - 40 Compare the mystico-allegorical interpretation advanced by H.H.O.Chalk, 'Eros and the Lesbian pastorals of Longus', *JHS* 80 (1960), 32–51.
 - 41 On this aspect, see D.Teske, *Der Roman des Longos als Werk der Kunst* (Münster, 1991).
 - 42 For fuller discussion see my essay 'Daphnis and Chloë: Love's own sweet story', in J.R. Morgan and R.Stoneman (eds), *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*

- (London and New York, 1994) 64–79, and my commentary on *Daphnis and Chloë* in the Aris and Phillips series (forthcoming).
- 43 And of course this dream, which seems at first to refer to the sexual act Kleitophon is about to commit with Leukippe, later achieves a more literal fulfilment when Leukippe is disembowelled; except that she is not really! The complex creation and manipulation of expectations depends on the reader's sophisticated knowledge of generic rules; see the excellent analysis by S.Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel*, 87ff.
- 44 See J.J.Winkler, 'The mendacity of Kalasiris and the narrative strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*', *YCS* 27 (1982), 93–158; J.R.Morgan, 'Reader and audiences in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros', *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel* 4 (1992), 85–103.
- 45 On these aspects of Antonius, see J.R.Morgan, 'Lucian's *True Histories* and the *Wonders beyond Thule* of Antonius Diogenes', *CQ* 35 (1985), 475–90; J.Romm, 'Novels beyond Thule: Antonius Diogenes, Rabelais, Cervantes', in Tatum, *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, 101–16; id. *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton, 1992), 202–11; M.Fusillo, *Antonio Diogene. Le incredibili avventure al di là di Tule* (Palermo, 1990), 11–49.
- 46 B.Egger, 'Zu den Frauenrollen im griechischen Roman. Die Frau als Heldin und Leserin', *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel* 1 (1988), 33–66; ead. 'Women in the Greek Novel: Constructing the Feminine' (Diss., Irvine, 1990).
- 47 This is Bakhtin's 'chronotope of adventure-time'. See the important, if generalized, discussion in *The Dialogic Imagination* (Austin, 1981), 84ff.
- 48 The best treatment of love in the novels is in M.Fusillo, *Il romanzo greco. Polifonia ed Eros* (Venice, 1989); available in French as *Naissance du roman* (Paris, 1991). See now D.Konstan, *Sexual Symmetry: Love in the Ancient Novel and Related Genres* (Princeton, 1994). For Heliodoros see J.R.Morgan, 'The story of Knemon in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros', *JHS* 109 (1989), 99–113.
- 49 There is some equivocation here, and the occasional stridency with which the novelists espouse romantic values suggests that they needed to persuade themselves as well as their readers. Not all the novelists are unsympathetic to homosexuality; important secondary characters in Achilleus and Xenophon are homo- or bisexuals, and only the parasite Gnathon in Longus is reviled as a pervert. However, only heterosexual lovers are ever granted a transcendent happy ending.
- 50 On the novels as Hellenistic myths, see Perry, *The Ancient Romances*, and Reardon, *The Form of Greek Romance*, with rather different perspectives.
- 51 R.Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (Munich, 1962), assigned each novel to a different mystery cult: Iamblikhos to that of Mithras; Achilleus to Isis; Longus to Dionysus; Heliodoros to Syrian sun-cult; the argument is restated for Longus in the same author's *Die Hirten des Dionysos* (Stuttgart, 1988). Merkelbach's predecessor in this approach, K.Kerényi, *Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Tübingen, 1927) was less specific and saw all the novels as Isis-texts.

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POLITICS AND THE BATTLEFIELD

Ideology in Greek warfare



Hans van Wees

He is one man wielding a spear amongst ten thousand others,
And does no more than any single man. Yet greater fame is his.

Euripides, *Andromache* 697–8

In 1943, Soviet forces beat off a German attempt to land on the Black Sea coast at Malaya Zemlya. Among the non-combatant party officials involved was Leonid Brezhnev. The incident passed without much notice, until some twenty years later. Then,

scores of Soviet writers began to describe the battle as a turning-point in the Second World War, comparable to the battle of Stalingrad and the defence of Leningrad. ...The decisive significance of Brezhnev's action at Malaya Zemlya...was touched up to the utmost extent in booklets and solid, multi-volume works.

Brezhnev won a literary prize for an autobiographical account of his exploits, and a popular song about the battle was given much air-time on Moscow radio. What had brought about this revision of history, of course, was Brezhnev's rise from lowly party commissar to leader of the Soviet Union. Another twenty years later history was revised again. In 1982, Brezhnev died, then fell from grace, and soon a historian stepped forward to announce that in fact neither the battle of Malaya Zemlya nor the ex-leader's role in it had been of decisive importance at all.¹

One is inclined to associate such propagandistic manipulation of history with totalitarian regimes, and it comes as a surprise to find something similar happening in ancient Greece, not least in famously democratic Athens. Yet we shall see that, from Homer to Aristotle, poets and writers slanted their accounts of warfare past and present so as to attribute a decisive military role to those in power—or those aspiring to power. Their bias was all the more effective for being less blatant; so much so that some of it found its way into modern histories of ancient Greece, unchallenged until recently.

POWER TO THE WARRIORS: AN IDEOLOGICAL HISTORY OF GREECE

It was a commonplace of Greek thought that a man should not ask what his country could do for him until he had shown what he could do for his country. Ideally, all

forms of political power and privilege, from hereditary kingship to citizen voting-rights, were supposed to be earned by outstanding services to the community, and no service was more important than fighting for one's city in war. The *Iliad* offers an epic version of this notion in Sarpedon's speech to Glaukos, his cousin and fellowruler of Lykia:

Why are we two honoured above all others in Lykia, with a seat and meat and more cups, and why do all look upon us as upon gods? And we possess a large royal domain on the banks of the Xanthos.... Because of this we must now take our stand among the foremost of the Lykians and face hot battle, so that some heavy-armoured Lykian may speak thus: 'It is certainly not without reputation that our princes rule over Lykia and eat fat sheep and drink choice sweet wine; no, their prowess is great when they fight among the foremost of the Lykians.'

(XII.310–21)

Much later, a comic and more democratic version of essentially the same ideal appears in Aristophanes' *Wasps*, when the chorus of elderly Athenians, dressed as wasps to symbolize the sting they used to have as soldiers in their younger days (and still have as stern jurymen), stake a claim to one of the perks of Athenian citizenship: the half-drachma pay for a day's jury-service.

It makes us wild to think that those who've never raised a hand
Or risked a single blister to defend their native land
Can draw their pay with all the rest: I think the rule should be
That if you haven't got a sting you get no jury fee.

(1117–21; transl. D.Barrett)

A philosophical justification for the ideal is advanced in Aristotle's *Politics*. It occurs to Aristotle that the 'right' forms of political organization are those where 'the One, the Few, or the Many rule *to the benefit of the community*' (1279a28–30). Rulers can only benefit the community, he continues, if they possess a certain 'excellence' (*arete*), and 'while it is possible for one man, or a few, to achieve surpassing excellence, it is hard for the majority to reach perfection in every excellence, except the warlike one: the latter does exist among the masses.' Where more than a few people share in the government of a community, therefore, it is right that 'sovereign power lies with the defenders' (1279a39–b4). Normally, it is assumed, the only defence force of any significance is the heavy-armed infantry, the hoplite army; it follows that 'the right form of political organization [*politeia*] must comprise only those who possess the hoplite panoply' (1297b1–2). In certain states, however, cavalry rather than infantry is the most effective arm, and here power is liable to fall to an elite of wealthy horsemen. 'Wherever the land happens to be suitable for cavalry, conditions are naturally suited to building up oligarchic power, because the safety of those who live there depends on this force, and horse-owners are men who have large properties' (1321a8–13). Either way, the state will be ruled, as it ought to be, by those who serve it best in battle.

In a brief but influential passage, Aristotle claims that the connection between war and politics helped shape the course of Greek history. Horsemen had once

been militarily and politically dominant everywhere in Greece, but had lost power to the hoplites as these became the more effective fighting force.

The first form of political organization to emerge among the Greeks—after the kingships—comprised those who did the fighting. The very first consisted of the horsemen [*hippeis*], for strength and superiority in war lay in cavalry since the hoplite force is no use without organization, and among the ancients formations and experience in such matters were lacking. Hence strength lay in cavalry. But when cities grew and the infantry was strong, many more men were part of the political community.

(1297b16–28; cf. 1289b34–41)

On Aristotle's analysis, Greek democracy emerged in accordance with the principle that military achievement deserves the reward of political power.

Several sources take the process one step further. In fifth-century Athens, they say, it was neither the cavalry nor the infantry, but the fleet which was the decisive military force. Crews of warships were recruited from among those too poor to buy themselves a full panoply and hence unable to fight in the heavy infantry; power in Athens, therefore, belonged to the lowest social classes. The argument is stated most clearly, though reluctantly, by the so-called Old Oligarch in his essay on *The Athenian Constitution*:

The poor and common people there rightly [*dikaios*] have more than the noble and the rich, in view of the fact that it is the common people who man the ships and lend force to the city, and the helmsmen, the boatswains, the ship's officers, the look-outs and the ship's carpenters. It is these people who make the city powerful, much more than the hoplites and the nobles and the decent people. Seeing, then, that this is so, it seems right [*dikaion*] that all should share in positions of leadership...and that any citizen who wishes should have the opportunity to speak (1.2).²

The Athenian fleet expanded hugely as a result of Themistokles' shipbuilding programme in 483 BC, achieved its most resounding success in defeating the Persians at Salamis in 480, and under Kimon and Pericles went on to create the Athenian empire. The sources vary in their views on which of these stages of development was the true turning-point in the growth of popular power, but tend to agree that the effect was to make the common people 'feel bold', 'think big', and take more power for themselves.³

In outline, the neat picture of Greek history that emerges from these texts has long been accepted by modern historians. The political implications of the rise of the fleet are often noted (though rarely explored in any depth), while the political implications of the rise of the hoplite army are amongst the most hotly debated issues in Archaic Greek history.⁴ Modern interpretations vary considerably from one another and are a good deal more sophisticated than the simplistic vision of the ancient sources, but they share the fundamental premiss that a social class which acquired a newly important military role was inspired to claim, and enabled to obtain, greater political power.

There is, however, good reason to reconsider this link between military and political predominance. For a start, there are some striking inconsistencies in the

thought of Aristotle, our most articulate source on the subject. While recognizing that a state may owe much of its power to its fleet rather than its army, he refuses to follow the Old Oligarch in drawing the logical conclusion that those who man the ships thereby earn themselves a share in power. He argues that a state could (and should) simply build up a large navy without giving any political rights to those who man it.

If a city seeks a hegemonial and political role, it must of necessity dispose of sea-power, too, in proportion to its activities. It is not necessary that the large numbers of people who stem from the creation of a naval mob (*nautikos okhlos*) add to the size of the political community, because *there is no need for these people to be part of it*.

(*Politics* 1327b4–9)

The principle applied in justification of hoplite power is thus suddenly abandoned when its strict application would have justified a more radical form of democracy in which the ‘naval mob’ had its share. Accordingly, Aristotle is blunt and hostile when he describes the growing power of lower-class rowers in Athens. ‘The common people, having been responsible in the Persian wars for establishing Athens’ leadership at sea, gained self-confidence and took worthless leaders, while the decent people opposed them.’⁵ The poor generally, whether employed as rowers or as light infantry, are seen as constituting a military threat, not as a group with a legitimate claim to power.

Wherever there is a large crowd of this kind and they start a civil war, [their opponents] often have the worst of the fighting.... In civil wars, the common people defeat the well-to-do for the following reason: being light-armed, they fight easily against cavalry and hoplites.

(1321a13–21)

In short, regardless of their services to the community, rowers do not *deserve* a say in political affairs; the relation between navy and democracy, as Aristotle sees it, is merely that a fleet employs a large number of men who may become aware of their own strength and decide to take power by *force*. Hoplites, on the other hand, supposedly do earn themselves the right to hold power, and the transition of power from horsemen to hoplites is portrayed as a smooth, near-automatic process: nothing in Aristotle’s text suggests a coup or confrontation.

The lack of objectivity here is painfully obvious. Aristotle favours government by hoplites and disapproves of broader democracy. Hence he cites the principle of political power in reward for military service when it says that hoplites should rule, but ignores it when it says otherwise.

Similar political biases affect much of our information on ancient Greek warfare and politics, hampering our understanding of both. The history of Greece presented above is an ideologically coloured history, developed to legitimate, in retrospect, shifting balances of power. We shall see that in reality it was by no means clear that one particular social group—now aristocratic horsemen, now well-off hoplites, now poor rowers and light-armed—contributed far more than others to the protection of the community. Most men, most of the time, played a role in war of some significance, and although changes in military practice occurred, these were not such as to confer

a wholly new significance upon first the hoplites and then the lower classes. If our sources suggest otherwise—and they often do—it is because politics get in the way of a clear view of the battlefield. As each social class seeks to justify its claim to power by stressing its own military importance, it cannot and will not give others their due.

RADICAL DEMOCRACY: ROWERS AND HOPLITES

The link between radical democracy and the fleet was taken very seriously in Athens. There is a story that The Thirty, a group of oligarchs who overthrew democracy and for a while exercised a reign of terror over Athens in 404 BC, made a show of dissociating themselves from maritime power by turning round the speaker's rostrum in the popular assembly, so that it no longer faced the sea but looked out over the countryside.⁶ Later, Plato went so far as to argue that a state would do best not to have a fleet at all, not even for self-defence, because the price of survival is too high if it means having to pay respect to the lower classes.⁷

We find, however, that in the fifth century not all Athenians accepted the idea that their city relied on the fleet as its main weapon. In 411 BC, a group of anti-democrats put forward a programme of constitutional reform proposing 'that not more than 5,000 people are to take part in political affairs, and that these are to be the people who bring the greatest benefit [to the city] through their possessions and physical actions' (Thucydides VIII.65,3; cf. Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 29,5). These five thousand turn out to be 'those who provide the panoply' (VIII.97,1; cf. *Ath. Pol.* 33,1). One who says that hoplites do more for the community than anyone else is of course asserting that the infantry is more important than the fleet; and this assertion was made soon after the Old Oligarch, playing devil's advocate, had claimed a decisive role for the navy, adding that the Athenian hoplite infantry could not even hold its own against the armies of neighbouring cities, let alone defend the empire (II.1).⁸ A modern historian, aiming to be objective, will probably judge that the fleet did indeed do most to create and maintain Athenian dominance, while acknowledging that the heavy infantry played quite a significant part too, and that the role of the cavalry and the light-armed, especially during the Peloponnesian War, should not be overlooked either. Objective judgement, however, hardly matters here. The point is that in Athens different groups held different opinions on the relative importance of the various branches of the military, each side claiming a decisive role in war for those whose power they sought to defend.

The subjectivity of such claims is underlined by the fact that the importance of the fleet received only belated recognition. Maintaining a fleet appears to have been a central concern of Athenian state-organization as far back as the seventh century, when the smallest administrative units were required to provide a ship each, and indeed were called *naukrariai*, 'ship-districts'.⁹ We know that during the sixth century Athens conquered Salamis, kept up a long feud with Aegina, and occupied territory in the north-eastern Aegean, none of which would have been possible without a fleet. Unfortunately, we do not know how large this fleet was, what proportion of it consisted of *triremes* as opposed to much smaller *pentekonters*, to what extent ships were used

in sea-battles rather than as troop-transports, or who provided the manpower. Nevertheless, it is worth bearing in mind that the fleet and the military role it provided for the common people were not created from scratch by Themistokles in 483 BC; it seems likely that Themistokles did no more than double the number of ships.¹⁰

One might argue that, even if the fleet had played its part before, its sudden expansion, and the spectacular successes it soon scored, were a turning-point which raised it to a new level of importance. Yet there are signs that even at this stage recognition was not universally forthcoming.

A tradition recorded by Aristotle has it that the first seventeen years after the Persian wars were marked by the rising influence of the Areopagos, an exclusive council composed of ex-magistrates; this, he says, was because the Areopagos had *financed* the battle of Salamis. The council had paid each rower eight drachmai in advance, and ‘for this reason the people conceded respect to it’, letting it dominate political affairs (*Ath. Pol.* 23,1–2). For seventeen years, according to this story, the men who fought the battle got less credit than the men who paid them; the elite, not the common people, gained in power.¹¹ Herodotus makes no mention of any such action by the Areopagos (VIII.40–4), and the episode may therefore be a fourth-century invention, or, at any rate, represent a late and anti-democratic version of history.¹² If so, it merely illustrates the scope for selective judgement in assessing, in retrospect, the decisive factor in war. On the other hand, it is also possible that Aristotle is reporting a view that gained currency in certain circles shortly after the battle of Salamis. There certainly is evidence to suggest that at the time not everyone was prepared to give the navy all credit for defeating the Persians.

The earliest source to describe the battle of Salamis, Aeschylus’ tragedy *Persians* (472 BC), differs strikingly from our next source, Herodotus’ *Histories*, written in the 450s or 440s. Herodotus, in a celebrated passage, argues that the crucial element in the defence of Greece was the Athenian fleet: without it, the rest of the Greeks could not have withstood the Persian invasion (VII.139). Aeschylus, too, sees Athens as the saviour of Greece, but for quite different reasons. He has a chorus of Persian elders tell Atossa, their Queen Mother, that, if Athens is destroyed, ‘all Greece will be subject to the king’. In reply, she asks:

ATOSSA: Do they dispose of such a multitude of men for their army?

CHORUS: Indeed, an army of a kind that has already done the Persians much harm.

ATOSSA: And what else do they have? Sufficient wealth in their homes?

CHORUS: They have a source of silver, a treasury of the soil.

ATOSSA: Do they fight with bow and arrow?

CHORUS: Not at all. Spears for close combat and shield-bearing armour.

(234–40)

This is surprising. The comments of Herodotus, the Old Oligarch and others on the importance of the fleet lead us to expect that the chorus will *deny* that it is the army which is the basis of Athens’ power. Instead, the Persian elders confirm that this is so, though they stress the quality rather than size of the forces.¹³ Some scholars have found the dialogue so startlingly unexpected that they have proposed an emendation of Aeschylus’ text, so as to insert at least a reference to the fleet, but the fact is that

the fleet simply does not feature in this passage.¹⁴ Since the episode serves no dramatic purpose but the glorification of Athens, Aeschylus would have had every opportunity to mention the navy, had he felt that it had been instrumental in bringing Athens victory. Evidently he thought otherwise: Athens' success had been due to its crack army and its wealth in silver.¹⁵

It is, therefore, hardly a coincidence that Aeschylus, when he comes to describe the actual battle, and of course cannot ignore ships and rowers, still manages to give equal prominence to a related *hoplite* engagement on the island of Psyttaleia. Here the Persians had stationed a force to mop up shipwrecked Greeks after the expected victory, but the Greeks had managed to land on the island and massacre the enemy troops. While Herodotus covers the episode in a few lines (VIII.76, 95), Aeschylus presents it as the culmination of battle. He devotes a substantial narrative to it (441–71), asserting that for the Persians the defeat at sea amounted to 'less than half the evil' and that the loss of their picked hoplites was a disaster *'twice as bad'* (435–7). No doubt this is an exaggeration for dramatic effect, rather than a sober assessment of the damage done, but its effect is to deprive the rowers of much military credit, by implausibly suggesting that in this most famous of ancient sea-battles the heaviest blow was dealt in a marginal infantry engagement.¹⁶

Our earliest source, then, does not share the view of Salamis familiar from Herodotus and later authors. Perhaps this view had not yet been formulated, eight years after the battle; it may be that the lower classes did not try to make ideological capital out of their military success until the 460s, when they had scored a succession of further naval victories, and, led by Ephialtes, began to seek political power. Alternatively, if the view that Athens owed its survival to those who rowed the ships had already gained currency soon after the war, Aeschylus chose to reject it in favour of an interpretation which is, at worst, hostile to the fleet, or, at best, a compromise between the rival claims of rowers and hoplites.¹⁷ Thus the crucial role of the navy, and the claims to power based on it, were not recognized by everyone, and indeed *may* not have been acknowledged at all until ten or fifteen years later.

If the perception of the fleet as Athens' main weapon was subject to debate, so was the notion that literally the driving force behind the navy, and responsible for its successes, were the lower classes—those who belonged to the lowest property class, the *thetes*, to be precise. For a start, one could argue that the wealthy men who were appointed *trierarchs*, and at considerable expense to themselves equipped, manned and ultimately captained the warships, made a disproportionately large contribution. Even more persuasively, one could argue that the crucial contribution came, not from the rowers, but from the *marines*, i.e. the troop of hoplites which fought from the ship's deck. Aristotle took this line when he said that a 'naval mob' need not be awarded political rights, adding: 'the marines are free and are hoplites; they are in charge and have power over the rowers' (*Politics* 1327b9–11). Apparently, the implication is that the marines are more important than the rowers, and can therefore justifiably be given exclusive political privileges.

The importance of the role played by marines would vary. Naval battles were sometimes decided by deck-to-deck fighting involving a considerable number of hoplites, but by the late fifth century such tactics were regarded as old-fashioned. Athens at this time prided itself on its proficiency in executing quick naval manoeuvres

and disabling enemy ships by ramming. Such tactics relied heavily on the skill of rowers and helmsmen, rather than on the bravery of the hoplites on board. In the early stages of the Athenian rise to maritime power, though, the marines were probably quite a significant factor; according to Herodotus, Themistokles' harangue before the battle of Salamis was addressed, not to the rowers, but to the assembled Greek marines.¹⁸ In any case, the 'real' role of the marines matters less than the fact that, once again, there is room for subjective judgement in assessing the respective contributions of rowers and soldiers to victory and defeat.

Even if one grants that no one was more responsible for the successes of the Athenian fleet than the rowers, helmsmen and other ship's officers, it is by no means clear that a majority of these were actually recruited from among poor Athenian citizens. Half a century after the fall of the Athenian empire, the oligarchically inclined orator Isocrates claimed that 'in those days, when they manned the triremes, they embarked crews of *foreigners and slaves*, while sending out the citizens as hoplites' (*On the Peace*, 48). Although Isocrates is drawing a sweeping contrast with his own day, and can hardly be relied upon to provide accurate historical detail, there is supporting evidence that large numbers of foreigners and slaves *did* serve in the navy.

Slaves are rarely mentioned, but the sources seem to take it for granted that they formed part of the crew. The Old Oligarch explains that an advantage of frequent sea-travel is that 'a man and his slave' learn to row and pick up naval terminology. Evidently, his point is that, as a result, both citizens and slaves perform efficient service in the fleet (I.19–20; cf. I.11). Thucydides, in his elaborate account of the preparations for the Athenian expedition to Sicily, never once mentions slaves, but it emerges that they did take part, for when he comes to describe the disintegration of the enterprise he casually mentions that the slaves were deserting (VII.13, 2). An inscription mentions slaves among Athenian casualties of war in 464 BC, and it is likely that these were rowers.¹⁹ Explicitly attested is the use of foreign manpower, whether resident aliens (metics, *metoikoi*) or professional rowers hired abroad. Thucydides has the Corinthians put forward, by way of war propaganda, the idea that it would be possible to undermine Athenian naval superiority by simply buying out 'their foreign seamen' with an offer of higher pay, 'for the power of the Athenians is bought rather than home-grown' (I.121, 3). In other words, the *bulk* of Athenian crews allegedly consists of non-citizens. Pericles is later made to answer that such a strategy would pose no real danger to Athens because the mercenary rowers would be unlikely to take up the offer, and, even if they did, the Athenians would still have many highly skilled citizens and metics to take their place (I.143, 1–2). Athens, then, may have greater 'home-grown' resources than the Corinthians think, but Pericles' answer still implies that, unless circumstances force the citizens themselves into action, professional foreign rowers are employed in large numbers (cf. VII.13, 2). Even the native part of the crews includes metics, foreigners resident in Athens without enjoying any political rights. How large a proportion of rowers is recruited from this category emerges from yet another speech in Thucydides: haranguing his troops during the Sicilian expedition, the Athenian commander Nikias addresses the rowers at large as 'you who are regarded as Athenians, although you are not' (VII.63, 3), meaning of course that they are resident aliens. Towards the close of his speech

he also has some words for 'the Athenians amongst you', but his exhortations clearly presuppose that metics are in the majority.²⁰

It is often thought that widespread employment of metics, foreigners and slaves was a late development, due perhaps to the pressures of the Peloponnesian War, and that previously the fleet had been manned mostly by citizens. This is conceivable, but there is no reason to think so. Aristophanes, Aristotle and Plutarch may have attributed the early successes of the fleet to 'the common people' (*demos*), but this proves nothing. As we have seen, the Old Oligarch spoke as if the navy of his own day—i.e. *during* the Peloponnesian War—depended entirely upon the common people, although it is now clear that at the time metics, slaves and foreigners were more than pulling their weight at the oars. It seems likely that a sizeable proportion of ships' crews had consisted of slaves and outsiders all along.²¹ When the sources ignore these men and credit only citizen rowers, helmsmen and ship's officers with naval victories, they demonstrate once again their selectivity and subjectivity in attributing a decisive military role to those who share power, and denying such a role to those excluded from political life.

While *we* may have no doubt that, from the battle of Salamis onwards at least, the fleet played a crucial part in Athens' defence and expansion, and that the lower classes occupied a prominent role in the fleet, it may have taken fifth-century Athenians some time to arrive at this view, and there were always those who disagreed and argued that the hoplite army or even the hoplite marines were more important than the rowers. Rarely, if ever, did anyone give credit to the numerous slaves and outsiders who served alongside the citizen-sailors. At the root of this lay political bias rather than critical analysis of military practice. The view that only hoplites mattered was put forward by those who wished to exclude everyone else from political affairs; while the importance of the rowers was stressed by those who favoured a more broadly based democracy. The efforts of non-citizens were ignored by all because metics—and slaves, of course—were deemed unworthy of political rights.

This raises a question: given that the issue of whose is the most decisive contribution to military success is a matter of subjective judgement and political debate, not a straightforward matter of fact, would it have been *self-evident* to the Athenian lower classes that it was their contribution which had become crucial? And was it an awareness of new-found military importance which prompted them to stake a claim to power, as both ancient sources and modern authors say? Compare the attitude of the metics, who evidently fulfilled a significant role in the fleet—as well as in the army—without ever demanding a share in power, let alone being granted one. Athenian citizen rowers might conceivably have adopted a similarly resigned attitude. Conditioned to think of themselves as inferiors, they might have been content to carry on doing their bit for the country without feeling that this entitled them to privileges; they might have allowed the hoplite infantry, particularly perhaps the hoplite marines, to take all the credit.

In order, therefore, to explain why in fact they *did* come to see and assert their own importance, I think we must assume that the common people at the time *already* cherished political ambitions, which impelled them to reject the traditional perception of hoplite superiority and to seize upon the successes of the fleet to

justify their own desire for a voice in politics. In other words, I would suggest that the rise of the Athenian fleet did *not* cause the emergence of radical democracy. Serving in the fleet might not have made any difference to the political ambitions of the lower classes, had they not already been seeking a greater share in government.

We shall find support for this view when we examine the place of the light-armed in war and politics.

HOPLITE DEMOCRACY: HEAVY AND LIGHT INFANTRY

For the sake of their city, the poorer citizens of Athens did more than man the rowing-benches of warships. Those who fell below the property-qualification for service as hoplites equipped themselves as best they could and went into battle as light-armed, alongside the heavy infantry. Their role appears quite marginal; one barely notices their presence when reading the *Histories* of Herodotus or Thucydides. On the other hand, light infantry, if properly trained, *could* be highly effective, even against hoplites. The Athenian army, amongst others, found this to its cost when cut to pieces by Aetolians armed only with javelins (Thucydides III.97–8). Hence, in the course of the Peloponnesian War, specialist battalions of several hundred professional archers, slingers and javelin-throwing peltasts became a feature of every self-respecting military expedition. Towards the end of the fourth century Aristotle felt able to claim, in a passage already cited, that light-armed find it ‘easy’ to fight hoplites. With regard to the role of light infantry in the archaic age and the fifth century, therefore, it has been said that ‘they had a future..., but in the battles of the hoplite armies they hardly had a present.’²² Actually, it was only the relatively small troops of well-trained light-armed foreign mercenaries—notably Rhodian slingers, Cretan archers and Thracian peltasts—which had a future. The military potential of the numerous light infantry recruited from the bulk of the poorer citizens appears never to have been utilized as effectively as it might have been.

We need not look far for an explanation of the preoccupation with hoplite warfare and the lack of interest in light infantry: ‘it was...the social and, especially, political implications of light-armed warfare that determined its “unduly subordinate role”.’ Hoplites, predominantly well-off farmers, pointed to their military role in justification of their political power, and would not allow ‘the poor peasantry,... the shopkeepers, petty traders, handicraftsmen and casual labourers in the town’ to play an equally prominent military role and draw from it legitimation for their own political aspirations.²³

There is no doubt, then, that political ideology cast its spell over military matters in discouraging Greek armies from making full use of the potential of the light-armed. But was the role of the light infantry as nearly non-existent as the sources suggest? It would be a truly remarkable example of the power of ideology if hoplites went so far as to deprive themselves of the support of a group of men at least as numerous as they, and, unencumbered by heavy armour, more mobile and better able to cope with mountainous terrain. There is, in fact, some evidence to suggest that light infantry was considerably less marginal in actual battle than it was in ancient perceptions and accounts of battle.

The sources say little about the role of light infantry in Athenian overseas expeditions, but it is clear that light-armed did take part. While Thucydides conscientiously lists the numbers of hoplites, cavalry, specialist archers and the like, sent abroad aboard the ships, he makes no mention of the general run of light-armed *unless* and until these are involved in some incident in the course of the expedition. Thus we are told that a fleet carried 2,000 hoplites and 200 cavalry against Spartolos in 429 BC, but nothing is said of light-armed until suddenly the local cavalry and light troops come out and defeat the Athenian cavalry and light infantry (II.79, 1 and 3–5). Again, a few years later, a fleet carrying 2,000 hoplites and ‘a few’ cavalry occupies Kythera (IV.53, 1), but we do not hear until later that a ‘scattered crowd of light-armed’ is involved as well (IV.56, 2).²⁴ Presumably, these light-armed suddenly springing into action are the rowers of the warships, taking on a new role, as Thucydides expressly tells us they did in the Athenian attack on Sphakteria in 425 BC. On that occasion the bulk of seventy-odd ships’ crews fought beside 800 hoplites, 800 archers and 800 peltasts to defeat a detachment of Spartan soldiers (IV.32). Given that Athenian fleets frequently consisted of some sixty to a hundred ships, and that each ship had a complement of up to 200 rowers, many thousands of light-armed would have been available to commanders of overseas expeditions, and it appears that considerable numbers of rowers were indeed regularly employed as light troops, even if most of the time our sources ignore them.

Even larger numbers of light-armed took part whenever a mass levy of the Athenian army invaded the territory of its neighbours. During the first six years of the Peloponnesian War, the Athenians invaded Megara twice every year, and on the first of these expeditions Thucydides notes that ‘a substantial crowd of light-armed’ went out, along with 13,000 hoplites (I.31, 3; cf. IV.67, 72). Light troops had participated in earlier expeditions, too: during an invasion of Megara in 458 BC, they had stoned to death thousands of trapped Corinthian soldiers (1.106, 2). An invasion of Boiotia in 424 provides us with our best evidence on the numbers of light infantry employed on such occasions. Having fortified Delion, a site in Boiotian territory, the Athenian army was on its way home when intercepted by Boiotian forces numbering 7,000 hoplites, 1,000 cavalry, 500 peltasts and ‘more than 10,000 light-armed’ (IV.93, 3). On the Athenian side, we are told, there were no ‘deliberately equipped light-armed’ (*psiloi ek paraskeues hoplismenoi*), that is to say, specialists to match the peltasts of the Boiotians. Moreover, the Athenians were deprived of the support of the ‘large numbers of ill-equipped troops’ who had at first joined ‘as part of the mass expedition of available foreigners and citizens’—in other words, the general run of light-armed, consisting of the poorer residents of Athens. They had already left for home, ahead of the hoplites. Originally, however, these non-specialist light troops had been present in ‘far greater numbers’ than among the Boiotians (IV.94, 1; cf. IV.90). It follows that in the battle of Delion the Boiotian light infantry outnumbered the hoplites by about 3:2, and the Athenian light-armed, had they not accidentally become separated from the rest of the army, would have outnumbered the hoplites perhaps by as much as 2:1.²⁵

These proportions are as nothing compared with the ratio of light-armed to hoplites apparently prevailing in the Spartan army. Herodotus almost obsessively repeats that, at Plataia in 479 BC, ‘thirty-five thousand light-armed helots protected [*epbulasson*]

the [five thousand] Spartiates, seven of them being drawn up [*tetagmenoi*] around each man' (IX.28, 2; cf. 10, 1; 29, 1; 61, 2). He adds that, although light-armed, they were equipped for combat, and that those of them who fell in battle were buried on the field in a communal tomb of their own, separate from that of the Spartans (IX.85, 2). Herodotus thus leaves no doubt that all these helots were fighting-men, rather than non-combatant personal attendants or 'an army service corps', as has been suggested.²⁶ A year earlier, at the battle of Thermopylai, too, helots had fought and died beside the famous 300 Spartans. The first we hear of them, however, is *after* the battle, when Greek corpses are put on display, among them those of 'the helots' (VIII.25). Since Herodotus cites an inscription to the effect that 4,000 Peloponnesians fought the Persians at Thermopylai (VII.228), but at the same time offers a list of Peloponnesian contingents adding up to 3,100 men only (VII.202), it is tempting to conclude that the missing 900 soldiers were helots; unfortunately, our information is too confused to be sure.²⁷ Helots continued to fight beside Spartans during the Peloponnesian War. In 418, for instance, all Spartans and helots were mobilized in defence of Tegea, and although helots do not feature at all in Thucydides' detailed account of the ensuing battle of Mantinea, we must assume that they did play their part.²⁸

References to light infantry are scarce and vague, yet numerous and clear enough to show that Sparta, Athens and the Boiotian cities made large-scale use of their light-armed serfs and poorer citizens, respectively. Precisely *how* they were used is not always clear: in the battles described by Thucydides the light infantry is stationed behind, beside, or temporarily in front of, the central phalanx of hoplites (IV.33, 1; VI.69, 2). It used to be thought that this had always been so, but scholars have recently begun to pay attention to a few scraps of evidence suggesting that light-armed might be scattered *among* the ranks of the hoplites. One can certainly find light-armed warriors beside heavy-armed fighters in a mid-seventh-century poem by Tyrtaios: 'You, light-armed men, must throw large stones, crouching under a shield, now here, now there, and cast your smooth spears against the enemy, taking a stand near the heavy-armed' (fr. 8.35–8 Diehl). Athenian vase-paintings of the late sixth century depict archers and hoplites side by side, and Herodotus' contention that at Plataia seven helots 'protected' and 'were drawn up around' (or 'assigned to') each Spartan, appears to imply that the light-armed were somehow incorporated into the hoplite phalanx even in the early fifth century. This evidence cannot be easily explained away, although it ill accords with our long-established view of the nature of classical hoplite warfare. We must be content to conclude that the separation of light- and heavy-armed in battle formation took place sometime after Tyrtaios' and before Thucydides' day, conceivably as late as the mid-fifth century.²⁹

Even assuming that the light infantry was generally positioned at the edges of the battlefield, its effect on the outcome of battle can hardly have been as marginal as the silence of sources suggests. The light-armed may have been untrained and ill-equipped, perhaps even badly motivated, but their sheer force of numbers must have counted for something. In particular, the Spartan reputation for invincibility appears in a very different light if it is true that every one of those awesome warriors might have as many as seven light-armed helping him destroy the enemy. Herodotus and Thucydides certainly create an impression that light infantry is of no account, by

taking its presence for granted and rarely bothering to specify its role or numbers, but we should not assume that this neglect is based on an objective historical assessment of the insignificance of the light-armed. Rather, it would seem that both these historians, in attributing military success and failure almost exclusively to the heavy infantry, are reflecting the hoplite ideology that the well-off deservedly enjoy political power because no one but they contributes decisively to the defence of the state.

The notion, propagated by ancient authors and accepted by modern scholars, that archaic and classical infantry battles were won and lost by hoplites alone thus stands in need of some revision. Hoplites reserved for themselves the credit derived from military success, but to achieve that success they enlisted the services of large numbers of disenfranchised, poor citizens or serfs. They managed to monopolize this source of political legitimation, in part through not developing the full potential of the light-armed mass, but more importantly by simply employing³⁰ these masses in battle without openly acknowledging their military significance or entering their achievements in the historical record.

If the light-armed, seen objectively, were by no means a negligible force, why did they never assert themselves, demanding recognition and political rewards for their military services? Not only could they have argued that they had a right to seek power, but they would have had the *might* to do so, since they outnumbered the hoplites and in equipment too, as Aristotle noted, were more than a match for the heavy-armed on the urban battlefields of civil war. In Sparta, a number of special circumstances prevailed, not least of which was the extreme violence brought to bear by the citizens against the helots, but in Athens, or in the Boiotian cities, where such conditions did not obtain, the reason for the unassertiveness of the light-armed must have been that the lower classes had no strong political ambitions.

It would appear that by the 460s, the Athenian lower classes, as well as having manned the fleet for a generation or more, had fought alongside hoplites in infantry battles for two centuries or more, without ever demanding a share in power. For all we know, despite their numbers and active participation in battle, the light-armed themselves had come to believe that their role was insignificant, as hoplites said it was. Again, the performance of useful services in war evidently did not inspire political ambition—until first a desire for power had stimulated awareness of the value of the military services performed.

ARISTOCRACY: HORSEMEN AND FOOTSOLDIERS

Historically the most important of the supposed links between military and political dominance is the mid-seventh-century shift of power away from aristocratic horsemen to a class of small but prosperous farmers fighting on foot in the hoplite phalanx. We have already encountered Aristotle's version of the story: horsemen were initially the most effective armed force, but when the heavy infantry grew in numbers and organization, it earned itself sovereign power. Martin Nilsson in 1929 borrowed this basic idea, and scholars have transformed it since. Whereas Aristotle implied that the superiority of the aristocracy lay in their use of cavalry tactics, Nilsson and many

scholars thereafter have argued that the nobles dismounted to fight, and dominated battle as individual champions, excelling not so much in horsemanship as in the strength, skill and courage needed in man-to-man combat. It is assumed that the commoners of the day were too ill-equipped or cowardly to contribute anything much to battle.³¹ This view of the aristocrats' role in early Greek warfare is drawn from the *Iliad*, and Homer's world of princes and kings riding into battle on chariots is tacitly identified with Aristotle's age of cavalry.³² While Nilsson still accepted that 'it was only natural' and '*selbstverständlich*' that power should be '*given to*' the hoplites once these replaced the noble horsemen as the main military force, most scholars have taken a further step away from Aristotle. They have taken their cue from his analysis of the rise of the rowers rather than the hoplites and have introduced an element of conflict into the process. Hoplites, it is believed, derived a new feeling of confidence and an awareness of shared interests from their new prominence in battle, and forcibly took power from the nobles. Specifically, they supported coups in which so-called tyrants overthrew existing aristocratic regimes.³³

That such substantial modifications and additions are apparently required to uphold Aristotle's theory might in itself make one question the validity of the original idea, but even more questionable—as has recently begun to be recognized—is the interpretation of Homeric warfare on which the modern version of the theory has come to rely. Two questions are currently being asked. First: can Homer's heroes properly be called aristocrats? Second: is it true that in Homer a handful of heroes determine the outcome of battle?

The first question must be dealt with briefly. Against a considerable body of recent opinion, I would support the traditional view that Homeric communities are indeed governed by hereditary—though not necessarily long-established—aristocracies. The prime objection that has been raised against this view is the surprising scarcity of references to nobility of birth, and contrasting abundance of comments on personal qualities and achievement. This has led scholars to abandon the idea of a hereditary ruling class in favour of a notion of a classless society governed by individuals emerging as *big men* on the strength of personal merit. While the objection is valid, the conclusion is premature. There is—just—enough evidence in the epics to show that the poet takes the existence of a hereditary aristocracy for granted. The epic emphasis on merit does not prove the contrary. When Homer attributes wisdom, beauty, and above all, military prowess to leading figures, he is not reflecting a real world where talent rules, but creating an *ideal* world where inherited power and personal merit happily coincide. The happy coincidence is there not merely for the sake of a good story, but also because it is required by the Greek ideal which we have been discussing, and which in the *Iliad* is best expressed in the words of Sarpedon cited earlier: the enjoyment of power and privilege must be justified by a display of personal excellence in the service of the community.³⁴

So to the second question: do Homeric heroes, as aristocrats and horsemen, dominate battle? They certainly dominate Homer's *narrative* of battle, with about a dozen heroes constantly the focus of attention while anonymous tens of thousands of warriors appear merely as cannon-fodder or set-decoration. A prominent role in battle-narrative, however, does not necessarily mean a decisive role in battle, and we must look more closely at the role played by aristocratic heroes in epic warfare.

At first glance, several types of evidence seem to confirm that a few heroes almost single-handedly fight and decide battles. Their style of combat is the first thing to suggest this. The pattern is for a man to step or run forward, pick an enemy, fight and retreat into what is described as 'the multitude of his companions'. Often, the action is no more than a quick hit-and-run foray into enemy lines, but sometimes the sequence is elaborated, with men conspicuously striding forward, shaking their spears, challenging the enemy, engaging in conversation with their opponent, exchanging blows, and the victor gloating over and despoiling the body of his enemy. Since the combatants take their time and no third party intervenes in such 'duels', one is left with the impression that these are fought in near-isolation while an admiring and anxious 'multitude of companions' looks on from a distance. If so, one would certainly have to credit the duelling champions with a decisive role in battle. A more careful look at the text, however, brings to one's notice brief phrases which unmistakably hint at wider participation in combat. Duels are fought 'in the crowd'; men step forward 'among the fighters at the front [*promakhoi*]; after battle the ground is strewn with corpses and running with blood, although not all that many killings have actually been described. The poet intersperses his duelling scenes with panoramic overviews of battle featuring Trojans and Greeks at large 'striking with spears and swords' or 'many sharp spears...and feathered arrows...and many large rocks' flying through the air. Evidently, the seeming isolation of a few fighting heroes is a narrative convention, the result of 'zooming in' on a part of the action, and the poet in fact envisages a battle in which at any one time large numbers of men are engaged in combat.³⁵

Second, and more significantly, there are numerous passages which explicitly attribute a major breakthrough to a single hero—sometimes assisted by a god. 'Then the Greeks were miraculously put to flight, all of them, by Hektor and Father Zeus. He killed only Periphetes, the Mycenaean' (XV.636–42). Similarly, the entire Trojan army is said to have panicked as a result of one of their men being decapitated and his head being raised aloft on the point of a spear (XIV.496–510). Conversely, a single hero may prevent a breakthrough, as when Aias slowed down a Trojan advance: 'by himself, he fought wildly, standing midway between Trojans and Greeks' (XI.566–71). But here, too, a look at the context shows that such passages are less straightforward than they seem. Hektor's killing of Periphetes, for example, does not stand alone but takes place against a background of general Trojan success: 'Zeus constantly raised great courage among [the Trojans]. He put a spell on the spirit of the Greeks and denied them *kudos*, but urged the others on' (XV.592–5). Hektor's feat thus does not decide battle by itself but is merely the last straw for the Greeks. As for Aias' heroic defence, it emerges from the rest of the episode that he is not supposed to be literally 'by himself, but has a large crowd of followers with him; he is 'alone' only insofar as no other *leader* is resisting any more.³⁶ In addition, turning-points in battle are elsewhere attributed to collective fighting efforts rather than individual feats. 'Through their own prowess, *the Greeks* broke the enemy ranks' (XI.90–1). 'Men may attain victory relying on their strength and efforts, their bravery and *numbers*' (XVII.328–30).³⁷ The poet thus acknowledges that the general run of fighters plays a part and *can* determine the outcome of battle, yet he tends to suggest that a great aristocratic warrior can single-handedly achieve as much as a whole army of commoners.

Third, the *Iliad* has an episode in which the ‘men of the people’ (*demos*), as opposed to the ‘princes and excellent men’, are told categorically that their efforts on the battlefield are of no value. When the army is in uproar, Odysseus runs round trying to restore order.

Any man of the people he saw and found shouting, he would strike with the sceptre and threaten in speech: ‘*Daimonie*, sit still and listen to the words of others who are better men than you. You are no warrior; you have no strength; you are of no account at all in war or in counsel.’

(II.198–202)

Yet the implication that only aristocratic ‘princes and excellent men’ matter in battle is denied by some of the greatest heroes themselves. Sarpedon turns to his followers for support: ‘Lykians! What has happened to your courage? It is difficult for me, although I am a strong man, to keep so many men engaged and fight them all. The work of more is better’ (XII.409–12). Achilles later addresses his men in almost exactly the same words (XX.353–7), and Aias calls out:

‘Friends! You who excel among the Greeks, you who are average, and you who are rather bad—all men are certainly not equal in war, after all. Now there is a task at hand for *everyone*. You yourselves know this, of course.... Go forward and encourage one another.’

(XII.265–74)

Odysseus may depreciate the efforts of the masses, but his fellow-aristocrats, at any rate, are fully aware that a battle cannot be won without the help of the commoners.

Some commoners are aware of this, too. The ‘worst’ man of them all, Thersites, claims that while ordinary men such as he bring in booty and prisoners for the benefit of their leaders, they do not receive sufficient reward for their efforts. Indeed, he ends up proposing that the army should desert their commander-in-chief, leaving him alone with the booty he refuses to share out, ‘so that he may find out whether we are of any help to him, or not’ (II.226–38). Although Homer’s own depiction of battle implies that there is some justice in Thersites’ claims and complaints, the poet firmly takes sides against him, relating to the audience how this rebellious commoner was punished, publicly humiliated, and condemned by all.³⁸

In short, Homer paints an ambivalent picture of warfare. On the one hand, he focuses on a few famous heroes and credits these with an enormous influence on the course of battle while belittling the role of the anonymous masses; on the other hand, he acknowledges that, largely outside the frame, vast numbers of warriors play an active, important role, and that the collective efforts of this multitude are at times the decisive factor in battle. The origin of the poet’s ambivalence, I would argue, is that he is compromised between the ideals and the reality of warfare in his own day. In reality, mass combat prevailed, and hence a handful of aristocrats, however brave and well-armed, could not contribute decisively to victory or defeat. Ideally, however, contribute decisively to victory is precisely what these aristocrats *ought* to have done, by Greek standards, in order to justify their position of power within their communities. Hence Homer enhanced their significance in battle to unrealistic proportions. Just as later authors were inclined to ignore the light-armed

and the rowers for the greater glory of the hoplites, so Homer tended to ignore the bulk of the army, both light- and heavy-armed,³⁹ for the greater glory of the elite of aristocratic horsemen.

Quite possibly, then, there never was an age during which, by any objective criteria, the infantry was 'useless' and horsemen dominant. There is no good evidence for widening participation in battle or for heavy-armed commoners attaining a newly crucial importance. Already in the *Iliad*, masses played a full part in warfare, and generally must have been decisive by sheer weight of numbers, even if fighting in open formation and the use of chariots and horses did allow aristocrats to be relatively conspicuous and perhaps on occasion to have a disproportionate influence on the course of battle.

Combat tactics were subject to *some* change after Homer's time. The use of a full panoply of bronze armour, although by no means uncommon in Homer, probably became increasingly widespread, while from 650 BC there is evidence for the development of the denser and more rigid formations which characterized the classical hoplite phalanx.⁴⁰ Such scope as there had been for conspicuous deeds of strength and bravery must have been reduced as a result. If, however, the elite eventually blended into the anonymity of the mass, it was a slow process. Throughout the seventh and sixth centuries, as vase-paintings show, wealthy men continued to stand out by riding into battle on horseback, accompanied by a mounted squire. What is more, as late as the early fifth century, aristocrats might still fight single combats before battle; during battle, too, it was apparently somehow still possible to distinguish oneself sufficiently to win prizes for outstanding bravery.⁴¹ Change in tactics, then, was gradual and limited, and could scarcely have had the same impact as the putative introduction into the army of a whole social class which had previously been excluded from warfare. What remains of the so-called hoplite reform seems unlikely by itself to have inspired in the mass of soldiers a dramatic new sense of confidence, let alone a desire for power.

The political ambitions of the hoplite class must have arisen independently of its military role. That conclusion has in fact been drawn before, even by some of the historians who believe that combat tactics underwent radical innovation during the first half of the seventh century. They have rightly argued that the hoplite reform would not have had political consequences, had it not been for prior popular resentment against harshly exploitative aristocratic regimes. These scholars, though, do see the hoplite phalanx as a powerful new ideological as well as physical weapon to be used against the aristocracy: an instrument for, rather than a cause of, political change.⁴² By contrast, if one accepts that the hoplite reform is something of a mirage, one must conclude that even as a mere instrument the developing phalanx did not offer much that was new. The changes will have afforded ideological ammunition only insofar as increasing uniformity of equipment and a marginal reduction in warriors' freedom of action in combat may have made it somewhat more obvious how questionable were aristocratic pretensions of playing a decisive role on the battlefield. Also, the spread of heavy armour may have done something to bolster commoners' confidence and their ability to confront the elite, but its effect should not be overestimated: as we have had occasion to note, lightly equipped fighters were not necessarily inferior to fully armoured hoplites, and might well have had the

advantage when it came to fighting in the streets. Actual military change thus was not such as to warrant a drastic re-evaluation of either the prowess or the political rights of the common hoplite versus the noble horseman.

We must assume that it was indeed rising discontent with oppressive aristocratic rule which caused commoners to seek greater political power, and that this new political awareness made them see their own military role in a different light. Consequently they adduced their revised self-image as defenders of the community to legitimate their ambitions and ultimately managed to impose it even upon aristocrats forced to cope with a shifting balance of power. Changes in warfare aided the process only slightly. By and large, commoners carried on defending their cities in the same numbers and as effectively as before, while their services in war, once despised, now came to be perceived as highly valuable.

CONCLUSION: ANCIENT BIAS AND NEW THEORIES

When the ancient Greeks wrote their history, they tailored it to fit one of their most persistent political ideals, so that in present and past power seemed earned by prowess, and prowess rewarded with power. This ideal shaped the poets' image of battle in the heroic age, as well as historians' and philosophers' representations and interpretations of archaic and classical warfare. It might be added that the ideal took other forms, too. In the fifth century, the Athenian state felt it necessary to justify its imperial power over nominal 'allies' by appealing to its decisive role in the defence of Greece against the Persian invaders, although according to Thucydides no one genuinely accepted this justification.⁴³ From the late fourth century onwards, historians helped legitimate the monarchical power of Alexander the Great and his successors by seizing every opportunity to portray these kings as great warriors able to turn the tide of battle by feats of personal heroism and even by their mere presence on the field.⁴⁴ Political bias thus pervades ancient accounts, not only of constitutional and political history, but also of warfare, and the modern historian should treat these with caution.

The concept of a 'decisive factor' in battle has turned out to be highly problematic. It is so much a matter of subjective judgement and an issue of polemic in our sources that it is hard to arrive at an objective assessment such as has been cautiously attempted a couple of times in the above. The example from Soviet historiography which introduced our discussion poses the same difficulty: the newspapers may believe that we now know 'the full truth' about Brezhnev's role at Malaya Zemlya, but it is entirely possible that the revised account, too, is less than objective. The new regime denouncing Brezhnev, after all, stands to gain by playing down his alleged achievements as much as possible. One is forced to wonder whether objective judgement in pin-pointing a single factor of paramount importance is feasible at all, where a complex of events as intricate and contentious as a battle or war is concerned. Whereas the views of contemporaries on who or what was most responsible for the outcome of a war, or indeed any course of events, are, of course, of great interest to us, the issue of the 'decisive factor' as a subject of scientific historical analysis is perhaps best avoided.

The main conclusion to be drawn from our argument is that changes in Greek warfare were far less dramatic, and had far fewer political ramifications, than our sources suggest and historians have long believed. From Homer to Aristotle and beyond, we find horsemen, hoplites, light infantry and ships all playing a part in war at all times. Of course, they did not always play exactly the same role, but both the elite and the bulk of the population in various ways actively participated in battle throughout Greek history, and, as we have seen, there is little ground for objectively crediting one rather than another social group or branch of the armed forces with a clearly decisive role at any time. Hence historical developments in tactics, equipment and patterns of warfare cannot be said to have amounted to clear-cut transfers of military dominance; if ancient *perceptions* of military dominance altered a great deal, this was primarily the result of changes in the balance of power within communities.

The development of the phalanx and the expansion of the Athenian fleet, although of military significance, did not have the revolutionary political impact generally attributed to them. Neither of these processes might have had any political impact *at all*, if the hoplite and lower classes involved had previously been resigned to their lot. Only because military developments affected social classes cherishing *prior* political ambitions did they play some small part in political change, by inspiring an extra degree of ‘confidence’⁴⁵ and perhaps also by making ideological justification seem that much more plausible.

It is unfortunate that we end up with a result which is negative insofar as it undermines established explanations of the rise of tyranny, hoplite democracy and radical democracy without offering anything to replace them. Yet the result is positive in that it exposes a pervasive political bias in our sources and an unwitting bias in modern accounts of the military and political history of Greece. In doing so it may perhaps clear the way for the new and better historical theories that it is unable to offer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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NOTES

- 1 The historian who ‘deflated a long-standing official myth’ was Yuri Polyakov; he did so in an interview with the *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, as reported by Reuter (*The Guardian*, 10 August 1987).
- 2 For the translation of this passage, see B.Jordan, *The Athenian Navy in the Classical Period* (Berkeley, 1975), 218–19; and 138–50 for the ship’s officers’ titles; also J.S. Morrison and J.F.Coates, *The Athenian Trireme* (Cambridge, 1986), 107–27. Compare Plato, *Laws* 707: ‘States which owe their power to their navy do not, in return for their safety, honour the finest warriors [i.e. the hoplites], because their

safety is ensured by the skills of helmsman, ship's officer, rower, and by all sorts of by no means upstanding men.' Similarly, Plutarch, *Themistokles* 19.4, says that Themistokles 'elevated the common people above the best men and made them bold, as power fell to the rowers, the boatswains and the helmsmen' (cf. 4.3 on the ineffectiveness of the Athenian *infantry* at the time). Aristophanes, too, points out the merits of rowers: the blisters mentioned in the passage from *Wasps* cited above would have been the result of sitting on rowing-benches too long, as is clear from *Knights* 781–5, where The People personified is told that, besides praise for winning at Marathon, he deserves a cushion to sit on, 'so that you need not rub your scars from Salamis'.

3 See texts cited in n. 5 below.

4 In general: Oswyn Murray, *Early Greece* (2nd edn, London, 1993), 142 ('Aristotle is right to see a connection between the military arm of the state and its constitutional organisation, from the early aristocracies, through the hoplites to the "naval mob" of the Athenian democracy.'). Jordan (op. cit. (n. 2), 221) says that by serving in the fleet, 'the Athenian *thetes*...were defending not only their country, but also the basis of their political power'; compare e.g. J.M.Moore, *Aristotle and Xenophon on Democracy and Oligarchy* (2nd edn, London, 1983), 246 (the importance of the fleet 'had a direct bearing on the establishment of radical democracy'); M.I.Finley, *The Ancient Greeks* (London, 1963), 74 (the 'political implications' of a prominent navy were 'perfectly visible to every contemporary'). Publicity for a visit by the reconstructed trireme *Olympias* to London in June 1993 made some play with this notion, too, as for example in the newspaper headline WHEN BOATS LED TO VOTES (*The Guardian*, 15 June 1993). By a logical extension, it is argued that Sparta decided not to create a fleet in order to avoid having to create helot crews and thereby inspire political ambitions in the subject population (e.g. J.K.Davies, *Democracy and Classical Greece*, 2nd edn (London, 1993), 43).

Critical of such views are W.G.Forrest, *The Emergence of Greek Democracy* (London, 1966), 216, and K.-W.Welwei, *Unfreie im antiken Kriegsdienst*, Vol. I (Wiesbaden, 1974), 4–6.

For the debate on the rise of the hoplite phalanx, see pp. 165–70.

5 *Politics* 1274a12–15; cf. 1304a22–4; *Ath. Pol.* 27.1. See A.Lintott, CQ 42 (1992), 114–28, on Aristotle's general attitudes towards democracy. Such sentiments are echoed by Plutarch, who says that after the Persian wars it was felt not only that 'the people deserved consideration on account of their bravery', but also that 'it was no longer easy to *suppress* the people, now that they were strong in arms and proud of their victories' (*Aristides* 22.1; Plutarch wrongly attributes to Aristides the constitutional reform which followed); cf. *Themistokles* 19.4 (cited in n. 2 above).

6 Plutarch, *Themistokles* 19.4.

7 Plato, *Laws* 707; compare Isocrates, *On the Peace* 64, 94ff. See additional note, p. 178.

8 The disastrous defeat of the navy in the Sicilian expedition of 415–413 BC may have given anti-democrats an excuse for arguing that the fleet no longer was as vital a part of the Athenian forces as it had been when the Old Oligarch was writing (probably in the 420s). In fact, of course, the fleet continued to play a prominent role until the end of the Peloponnesian War, while there is no sign of the hoplite army becoming more active or effective during this period.

9 They were mentioned in Solon's laws (as cited by Aristotle, *Ath. Pol.* 8.3 (cf. 21.5), and Photios, *Lexicon* s.v. *naukraria*), and their magistrates, the *naukraroi*,

according to Herodotus (V.71; *contra* Thucydides I.126.5) played an important role in the seventh-century coup by Kylon. Since there were 48 'ship-districts', the seventh-century fleet would have consisted of at least 48 ships—probably *pentekonters*.

- 10 Herodotus (VII.144) states that Themistokles had 200 triremes built, and from his account of the fleet gathered at Artemision in 480, it appears that the *total* of Athenian ships is also 200 (127+20 (VIII.1)+53 (VIII.14); cf. the fleet of 180 ships at Salamis (VIII.44)). However, Herodotus also says that in 499 BC the Athenians on request sent 20 ships to aid the Ionian revolt (V.97), and in 489 BC mounted an expedition of 70 ships against Paros (VI.132); these ships must surely have been triremes, since these were in general use by this date (VI.8, 41). Probably, therefore, the Athenians had had a substantial fleet for some time, and Themistokles in 483 BC *increased* the number of ships to 200, rather than built all 200 from scratch. Aristotle's claim that Themistokles, in fact, had 100 ships built (*Ath. Pol.* 22, 7) makes good sense. (Cf. W.W.How and J.Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, vol. II (Books V–IX), *ad* VII.144.1.) On the assumption that 20 triremes were all Athens had in 499, a major shipbuilding programme would already have been carried out in the 490s, in which case it might still be associated with the early stages of Themistokles' career, and more generally with the war against Aigina. On the equally plausible assumption that the Athenians sent only part of their fleet to Ionia, the development of the fleet began even earlier, and one might assume a gradual growth from the seventh century (48 *pentekonters* = 2,400 men) to the 480s (100 triremes = 20,000 men), then a doubling of resources in 483.
- 11 Cf. Plutarch, *Themistokles* 10.4, for details as well as alternative stories.
- 12 Compare e.g. the obvious parallels between the alleged seventh-century constitution of Drako (*Ath. Pol.* 4,1–4), and the late fifth-century oligarchic constitutions.
- 13 So W.Kraus, *WS* 104 (1991), 61–3.
- 14 Simon Goldhill, *JHS* 108 (1988), 189–93, while rightly stressing the political import of the passage, finds that after verse 235 two lines are required in which 'the military prowess of the Athenians is being linked to something other than weight of numbers' (190). That this 'something other' is the fleet, was suggested by Denys Page in his OCT-edition (*ad loc.*) and accepted by H.Broadhead, *The Persae of Aeschylus* (Cambridge, 1960), 89–90, who paraphrased Page's '*naves habent satis validas*' as: 'No, but their sailors are specially famous for their bravery' (90 n. 1). Goldhill sees a veiled reference to the fleet in the verse about the silver-mines, since silver financed the building of the ships (191); this seems to me too specific an interpretation, since ancient sources commonly mention wealth as such, along with manpower, as a state's main source of strength in war. It is, for example, a central purpose of Thucydides' so-called *Archaeology* (I.1–19) to demonstrate that the Peloponnesian War was more important than wars of the past because the states involved were both wealthier and more populous. Herodotus claims that the Aeginetans, since they were enjoying 'great prosperity', were keen to make war on Athens (V.81).
- 15 Even if one accepts Kraus' suggestion (*op. cit.* (n. 13)) that, once Atossa has suggested that Athens' power may lie in the strength of its army, it would be 'too rude' for the chorus to deny this outright, this does not explain why the fleet is not mentioned subsequently. One might argue that the poet cannot make the chorus refer to the fleet since so far the Persians have had experience only of the Athenian infantry (at the battle of Marathon). That would presuppose a concern with historical accuracy which is belied by the use of dramatic convention in this

scene: the army has been away for about half a year, and yet this is apparently the first time that Atossa asks where it has gone; moreover, she is made not to know what or where Athens is, although her husband Dareios had previously attacked the city.

- 16 On the 'debate...over the relative merits of land and sea power', see C.W.Fornara, *JHS* 86 (1966), 51–4, and N.Loraux, *The Invention of Athens* (Cambridge, Mass., 1986), 161–3.

With regard to the Psyttaleia incident, both Fornara and Loraux argue the opposite of what I have said: they believe that it is *Herodotus* who exaggerates the role of the hoplites at the expense of the fleet. This argument rests on the assumption that in Aeschylus' version the hoplites who land on the island are *marines* (i.e. that they belong to the fleet), while according to Herodotus they form a separate hoplite force led by Aristides, originally stationed along the coast of Salamis. Now, although it is possible that Aeschylus regards them as marines, this is not necessarily so. It is true that they are said to have 'jumped out of the ships', but any force taken across to an island would of course have had to do so. The presence of archers (vv. 460–1) might point to marines but is equally compatible with a hoplite force accompanied by a number of light-armed, as such forces usually were (see pp. 163–4), especially since stone-throwers are also present (vv. 459–60). Moreover, from a political point of view, it matters little whether one attributes victory to hoplite marines or to hoplite infantry, since they belong to the same social class and are *both* contrasted with the lower classes who provide the ships' crews (see Aristotle, *Politics* 1327b9–11, cited p. 159). The real difference between Herodotus and Aeschylus, therefore, is the prominence which they accord to the episode in their narratives, and here the effusiveness of Aeschylus is in clear contrast with the laconic comments of Herodotus (so already C.Hignett, *Xerxes' Invasion of Greece* (Oxford, 1963), 263), and is in keeping with the fact that Aeschylus ignores the fleet in his picture of Athens, while Herodotus assigns crucial importance to it.

Paul Cartledge draws my attention to Aeschylus' epitaph, which mentioned his part in the battle of Marathon but made no reference to the naval battles in which he fought (Pausanias 1.14.5; cf. Athenaeus 627d–e; Plutarch, *Moralia* 604f.), and to the likelihood that the bulk of the *Persians*' original audience consisted of hoplites. Both fit in with the suggestion that Aeschylus displays a pro-hoplite bias.

- 17 A compromise would perhaps fit best with the carefully ambiguous line on the power of the Areopagos taken by Aeschylus in *Eumenides* 681–706, as Nick Fisher points out to me. The fact that Pericles was *choregos* for the first production of *Persians* cannot tell us much about its likely political orientation since it is entirely possible that at this early stage of his life Pericles' politics, if any, were far from democratic (cf. Plutarch, *Perikles* 7).
- 18 Herodotus VIII.83. For the evidence on the role of marines, see the discussion in Jordan (op.cit. (n. 2), 184–95), which does, however, rather exaggerate their numbers and importance in fifth-century naval warfare.
- 19 So Jordan on *IG* I² 928 (as well as *IG* II² 1951 and other evidence); he is, it seems to me, right to argue (*contra* in particular R.Sargent, *CPh* 22 (1927), 264–79, and M.Amit, *Athens and the Sea* (Brussels, 1965), 29–49) that slaves normally formed part of a crew, and that it is not the fact that slaves *serve* in the fleet at Arginousai, but the fact that these slaves are afterwards *set free* and given a form of citizenship, which is regarded as exceptional by our sources (op. cit. (n. 2), 260–4; so too Welwei, op. cit. (n. 4), 4–6, 65–104). However, Jordan's argument that the term

hyperesia is used exclusively for *slave*-rowers (ibid.) seems forced. See additional note, p. 178.

- 20 For a recent, though perhaps over-cautious, discussion of these much-debated texts, see Simon Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides, vol. I (Books I–III)* (Oxford, 1991), ad I.121.3 (pp. 198–9).
- 21 By contrast, Morrison and Coates (op. cit. (n. 2), 117–18) seek to play down the number of slaves and foreigners in the Athenian fleet even in the late fifth century, though they admit that many non-citizens must have served in the Kerkyrean fleet, at any rate, since of the 1,050 Kerkyrean prisoners taken in the naval battle of Sybota no less than 800 were slaves. Jordan (op. cit. (n. 2), 220) argues that in the early fifth century citizens made up the bulk of the crews, but suggests that by the end of the century, at the battle of Aigospotamoi, as few as 18 out of 200 rowers may have been citizens (ibid. 224).
- 22 F.E.Adcock, *The Greek and Macedonian Art of War* (Berkeley, 1957), 16.
- 23 Quotations are from P.Cartledge, *JHS* 97 (1977), 24 (citing A.M.Snodgrass, *Arms and Armour of the Greeks* (London, 1967), 85) and 23, respectively. Cf. Adcock, op. cit. (n. 22), 5 and 68 ('city-states preferred to trust to hoplites for their safety...for reasons not wholly military') and W.R.Connor, *PEP* 119 (1988), 26 ('light-armed troops...however great their military potential, are made to seem quite peripheral').
- 24 Another instance is perhaps the repeated appearance in the Athenian army of light-armed (*psiloi*) and stone-throwers, alongside hoplites as well as specialist archers and slingers, during the Sicilian expedition of 415–413 BC (VI.52.2, 64.1, 69.2, 100), although initially no more than 120 *psiloi* (exiles from Megara) are listed as taking part (VI.43).
- 25 On another occasion, the Boiotian army is said to have consisted of 5,000 hoplites and 5,000 light infantry (Thucydides V.57, 2). Note that the light-armed are not the personal (slave) attendants of hoplites, but in their own right members of the army, as is clear from their independent movements, and from the distinction made at IV.101.2 between *psiloi* and *skeuophoroi*, 'baggage-carriers' (cf. VI.64.1: distinction between *psiloi* and *okblos*, 'crowd [of attendants]'). A.W.Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. III (Oxford, 1956), ad IV.90, 1 and 4 (pp. 558–9), tries to explain away the light-armed with the argument that they were not meant to fight, but merely went along to help build fortifications at Delion. Their special role in constructing fortifications may mean that the number of light-armed present on this occasion was exceptionally large, but it will not alter the fact that substantial numbers of light-armed fought in the Athenian army on other occasions, and thus were presumably regularly mobilized—as they apparently were among the Boiotians—even when there were no fortifications to build. A recent survey of the evidence on stone-throwers and slingers may be found in W.K.Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, vol. V (Berkeley, 1991), 1–67.
- 26 By e.g. How and Wells, op. cit. (n. 10), ad IX.28, 2 and in Appendix XIX.1 (p. 364); Welwei, op. cit. (n. 4), 62–3, 120–4; P.Cartledge, *Sparta and Lakonia* (London, 1979), 175, 208. J.Ducat, *Les hilotes* (Paris, 1990), 158, convincingly argues that 35,000 men are far more than necessary to arrange food-supplies for 5,000 Spartiates, and that the only conceivable reason for their presence in such numbers is the one given by Herodotus: they are combatants. Cartledge (op. cit.) suggests that the figure of 7 helots for each Spartiate is 'inflated' (208) and may be mistaken or else 'represent the ratio of the Helot to Spartan populations as a whole' (175).

The proportion of light-armed to hoplites in all the other Greek contingents at Plataia, according to Herodotus (IX.29–30), was 1:1. These light-armed, too, are

- described as ‘combatants’ (*makhimoi*) and should not be confused with the non-combatant personal attendants who also accompanied hoplites—each man normally brought along a slave, or, in the case of the Spartans, a serf (e.g. Herodotus VII.229,1) to look after him during the expedition (cf. previous note).
- 27 How and Wells (op. cit. (n. 10), *ad* VII.202) propose to make up the missing numbers by adding 900 or 1,000 *perioikoi*, as suggested by Diodorus (XI.4.5), who, it would seem, is merely trying to fill the gap in his own way. Herodotus interprets the epigram’s reference to 4,000 Peloponnesians fighting the Persians as meaning that 4,000 fought on the final day and *all died* at Thermopylai (VIII.25). Since by the final battle the bulk of the troops had been sent away, and only 300 Spartans and 700 Thespians were left, this would imply the presence of 3,000 helots. On the other hand, the epigram may refer to all troops who fought, regardless of whether they stayed until the end; in that case it may include up to 900 helots, but it is conceivable that it merely gives an approximate round number, or that it, despite speaking of ‘Peloponnesians’, also includes Theban, Phokian and Lokrian troops.
- 28 Mobilization of all helots: Thucydides V.64.2 (cf. V.57.1). In addition, the forces are joined by an army once commanded by Brasidas, which includes 700 helots (V.67; cf. IV.78ff.; V.34): clearly these are not ‘the helots’ mobilized at V.64.2, as Andrewes in Gomme *et al.*, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, vol. IV (Oxford, 1970), *ad* V.57.1, suggests. I am not persuaded by Ducat (op. cit. (n. 26), 165–6) that Thucydides is referring to a putative permanent body of helots with hoplite equipment and training, or by Welwei (op. cit. (n. 4), 126–7) and Cartledge (op. cit. (n. 26), 253) that the references are to personal attendants. Thucydides’ phrase *autoi kai hoi heilotes pandemei* suggests not only all Spartans but also *all* helots.

The absence of any reference to these numerous helots in Thucydides’ detailed account of the battle-order at Mantinea (V.67) is striking. To my mind, it shows the extent to which light infantry was simply ignored by historians even when it was in action; it would be hard to believe that helots might have been levied *en masse* only to be left out of battle altogether. A. Powell observes that Thucydides deals in a similar manner with victims of the plague, listing exact numbers of horsemen and hoplites who died of it, but saying of *thetes* and others merely that ‘an undiscovered number’ succumbed (III.87.3): ‘in certain areas which were of no great concern to him Thucydides has intentionally omitted much’ (*Athens and Sparta* (London, 1988), 139).

Helots also formed part of the Spartan contingent at Pylos (unless these are personal attendants; Thuc. IV.8), and presumably provided (part of) the light-armed troops accompanying Spartan invasions of Athens (III.1; also Diodoros Siculus 13.72.4, where the *psiloi* are said to number 14,000).

- 29 Note also the archers and stone-throwers accompanying the hoplites at Psytaleia (480 BC), according to Aeschylus (*Persians* 459–61; see n. 16 above). The positioning of light-armed *amongst* the hoplites in Tyrtaios and the vase-paintings is noted by M. Vos, *Scythian Archers in Archaic Attic Vase-Painting* (Groningen, 1963), 70ff.; P. Krentz, *ClAnt* 4 (1985), esp. 54; G. Cawkwell, *CQ* 39 (1989), 388; J. K. Anderson, ‘Hoplite weapons and offensive arms’, in *Hoplites*, ed. V. D. Hanson (London, 1991), 15–16, 36 n. 20. By contrast, V. D. Hanson, in his detailed reconstruction of hoplite battle (*The Western Way of War* (London, 1989)), leaves no room at all for the light-armed, and W. K. Pritchett sees them operating only in the space between the armies before the clash of the phalanxes proper (*The*

- Greek State at War*, vol. IV (Berkeley, 1985), 51–4; cf. Welwei, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 8–17; Ducat, *op. cit.* (n. 26), 158.
- 30 They ‘employed’ them only in the sense that they allowed them to join military expeditions. There is to my knowledge no evidence of centrally organized mobilization of, or of pay for, light-armed soldiers (other than helots). We must assume that such poorer citizens went out voluntarily, in the hope of plunder and from a sense of patriotic duty.
- 31 M.P.Nilsson, *Klio* 22 (1929), 240, 245–7; *JRS* 19 (1929), 1–3. See also e.g. Forrest, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 88–9; Murray, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 54.
- 32 The identification is made easier by the fact that both cavalry and chariot-fighters are called *bippeis*, ‘horsemen’; archaic vase-paintings show that early cavalrymen did indeed dismount to fight, and that ‘true’ cavalry came to prevail only later (P.Greenhalgh, *Early Greek Warfare* (Cambridge, 1973)). Aristotle’s chronological distinction between an age of monarchies and an age of aristocratic horsemen is forced, since presumably even under the monarchies aristocratic horsemen ‘dominated’ battle—as is indeed the case in Homeric society where kings rule and noble horsemen claim to dominate in military affairs.
- 33 Nilsson is cited from *JRS* 19 (1929), 2 and *Klio* 22 (1929), 247; he is followed by e.g. Marcel Detienne, who claims that, as ‘la fonction guerrière’ falls to the farmers, ‘l’exercice du pouvoir politique est des lors assuré par un plus grand nombre’ (‘La phalange’, in *Problèmes de la guerre en Grèce ancienne*, ed. J.-P.Vernant (Paris, 1968), 120). An element of conflict and a link with tyranny is introduced by A.Andrewes, *The Greek Tyrants* (London, 1956), esp. 34–8, and Forrest, *op. cit.* (n. 5), 94–7; cf. id., *Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. J.Boardman *et al.* (Oxford, 1986), 28–31. Others go further, rightly making the ‘feeling of confidence’ derived from a new military role secondary to preexisting discontent with aristocratic rule: see n. 42.
- 34 For a more detailed discussion and bibliography, see H.van Wees, *Status Warriors: War, Violence and Society in Homer and History* (Amsterdam, 1992), 31, 78–89 and 274–6, where the traditional view, as represented by M.I.Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (2nd edn, London, 1977), is defended against recent scholarship which has been building on arguments against a hereditary aristocracy, advanced long ago by G.M.Calhoun, *CPh* 29 (1934), 192–208, 301–16.
- 35 As shown by J.Latacz, *Kampfsparänese, Kampfdarstellung und Kampfwirklichkeit in der Ilias, bei Kallinos und Tyrtaios* (Munich, 1977), esp. 68–95. See also H.van Wees, *CQ* 36 (1986), 286, and *CQ* 38 (1988), 4–7.
- 36 See van Wees, *CQ* 36 (1986), 288–9.
- 37 Further discussion of these and similar passages: van Wees, *CQ* 38 (1988), 15–17.
- 38 Compare the discontent expressed by Odysseus’ followers (10.40–2) and their immediate ‘punishment’ by the winds.
- 39 Light-armed mingling with the heavy-armed in Homer: H.van Wees, *CQ* 38 (1988), 10–12.
- 40 See H.van Wees, ‘The Homeric way of war. The *Iliad* and the hoplite phalanx’ (I) and (II), *G&R* 41 (1994), 1–18, 131–55; also id., *op. cit.* (n. 35). Latacz goes too far, I believe, in arguing that there is no difference between a Homeric and a classical battle, except that in Homer’s day the heavy-armed themselves temporarily engage in missile combat, while in the fifth century this is left to light infantry (*op. cit.* (n. 35), 226–9).

An important change not discussed here, and generally rather neglected, is that from aristocrats leading war bands of personal followers to appointed officers

commanding state-organized units. It seems clear that this is not an autonomous military development but a consequence of growing political centralization.

- 41 See H.W.Singor, 'Oorsprong en betekenis van de hoplietenphalanx in het archaische Griekenland' (Diss. Leiden, 1988), 260–2, 326–7, and, on mounted warriors with squires, Greenhalgh, *op. cit.* (n. 32); Welwei, *op. cit.* (n. 4), 17–22. Herodotus refers to an Aiginetan general and pentathlete who fought a series of single combats not long before the Persian wars, eventually to be killed in a duel with the Athenian Sophanes, who in turn was to become a general and won a prize for bravery at Plataia (VI.92.3; IX.75); cf. Pritchett, *op. cit.* (n. 29), 18–20.
- 42 J.Salmon, *JHS* 97 (1977), 84–101; A.M.Snodgrass, *Archaic Greece* (Berkeley, 1980), 107, 111–12; *id.*, *JHS* 85 (1965), 110–22.
- 43 V.89; cf.I.73.
- 44 See M.M.Austin, *CQ* 36 (1986), 450–66.
- 45 Anton Powell points out to me that Euripides (in a polemical passage which has provided the motto for this chapter) suggests that the common people would rule more wisely than those who actually govern them if only they had the required 'daring' (*tolma*; *Andromache* 699–702, cited by Powell, *op. cit.* (n. 28), 298). The importance of self-confidence in political action is not to be denied, but I hope to have shown that our sources (specifically Aristotle and Plutarch) much overrate the extent to which this 'boldness' was inspired by military success.

ADDITIONAL NOTE

Two articles which came to my attention only after completion of this paper support the position advanced here.

A.J.Graham, *TAPA* 122 (1992), 257–70, provides additional arguments for the view that 'just as on land, so on board the triremes, citizens, foreigners and slaves worked together' (p. 263). Paola Ceccarelli, *Historia* 42 (1993), 444–70, offers a detailed discussion of fifth- and fourth-century views on the relation between navy and democracy. Her conclusion, that the notion of 'une liaison de cause a effet entre thalassocratie et democratic' is 'une construction idéologique' with little or no basis in historical fact (pp. 469–70 and n. 100), is the same as mine, but based on different arguments.

GREEK PIRACY



Philip de Souza

INTRODUCTION

Perceiving the imminent defeat of the Ionian Greeks at the battle of Lade in 494 BC, their erstwhile admiral, Dionysios of Phokaia, gave up the struggle and led his ships away. Herodotus says that he did not make for his own city, because he knew that it could not hold out against the Persians.

Instead, with all that he had, he sailed directly to Phoenicia, and, after sinking some cargo ships there and taking a lot of goods, he sailed to Sicily, and established his base there as a pirate, attacking Carthaginians and Tyrrhenians, but not Greeks.¹

Dionysios' decision to turn from war to piracy is one which has been made on many occasions since the fifth century by defeated or demoralized sailors.² War and piracy have always had much in common, but their relationship was especially close among the Greeks. The acquisition of booty was a vital element in ancient Greek warfare, and it is often very difficult to distinguish between warfare and piracy in the sources for the archaic, classical and Hellenistic periods.

By the beginning of the first century BC, however, the course of action adopted by Dionysios of Phokaia had become far less viable. The Romans, already masters of a large part of the Greek-speaking world, were gradually assuming a role as the suppressors of piracy. Their attitude to piracy is illustrated by the text of a law, passed in 100 BC, which explains their decision to make Cilicia into a province for a Roman magistrate. The law was published widely in the Greek East, and parts of two translated versions have survived.³ It called upon all the friends and allies of Rome to assist in the suppression of piracy: 'according to this statute so that in the case of the [pirates it may be impossible for any of them] to cause trouble or for [a base] to be available.'⁴

One Roman magistrate, Marcus Antonius the Orator, had already campaigned against pirates in Cilicia in 102 BC and further campaigns were to follow, until Rome had established effective control of the coastline of the Mediterranean and substantially reduced piracy in the region. The task was an arduous one, and the Romans were never entirely successful at it, partly because of the long tradition of piracy in the Greek world, which goes back as far as the days of Homer, but they certainly reduced piracy to a minimum in the first and second centuries AD.

Before embarking on a study of Greek piracy, a few remarks are in order on definition and language. Piracy can be defined as *armed robbery involving the use of ships*. This definition combines three important elements: violence, acquisition and maritime travel. Piracy differs from warfare because, although it involves fighting, and hence appeals to the violent side of human nature, it does not have ‘political’ objectives, like conquest of territory (this distinction has less force in the Greek world, where plundering was often a major objective of warfare), and it differs from banditry because it involves ships, which provide greater mobility and range.⁵

The ancient Greek language had two common words for ‘pirate’, *leistes* and *peirates*.⁶ *Leistes* is found in Homer in various forms,⁷ and continued to be used by writers of prose and poetry throughout antiquity. *Peirates* is first attested in some inscriptions from the third century BC.⁸ By the time of Polybius *peirates* was synonymous with *leistes* and it was in general use, along with its cognates.⁹ Both *leistes* and *peirates* could be used to mean ‘bandit’ as well as ‘pirate’, but pirates could be distinguished from bandits by the nautical context in which they were found, or the use of a qualifying phrase.¹⁰ Another Greek word, *katapontistes*, meaning ‘pirate’ and not ‘bandit’, is found in the works of a few ancient writers, but is much rarer than *leistes* or *peirates*.¹¹ It should also be noted at this point that ‘pirate’ is a label applied to others which implies a moral or political judgement. It was not a title claimed by individuals in the ancient Greek world, although piracy was a less disreputable activity in the ancient world than the modern.

WAR AND PIRACY

It was only in the archaic period of Greek history, roughly 800–500 BC, that the concept of piracy started to emerge. Although there is evidence of Greek-speaking seafarers visiting most parts of the Mediterranean before the eighth century, there is insufficient literary evidence to enable us to determine the nature of their activities.¹² The Homeric poems, which were probably composed in Ionia around 750–700 BC, contain the earliest references to pirates in any ancient literature. If, as is widely believed, they reflect many of the ideals and practices of the poet’s contemporary culture and society, then they can be used as sources for archaic Greek attitudes to piracy.¹³ The view of piracy to be found in Homer is, however, an ambiguous one.

It is impossible to make a clear distinction between warfare and piracy in the Homeric poems. Homer does not actually use a word for ‘piracy’, and the activities of those who are labelled ‘pirates’ are virtually indistinguishable from the deeds of his heroes and warriors, who seem to share the same predatory motives and achieve similar results. What can be said is that ‘pirate’ is a label which is not applied *directly* to any of the heroes in the poems, and that it clearly has overtones of disapproval, as can be shown by reference to a few passages of the *Odyssey*. A formulaic greeting which is employed by Nestor, when speaking to Telemakhos, and the Cyclops in addressing Odysseus, is based on the assumption that pirates are ‘bad news’: ‘O strangers, who are you? From where have you come along the sea lanes? Are you travelling for trade, or are you just roaming about like pirates, who risk body and soul, bringing evil to other people?’¹⁴ The essence of the question seems not to be

‘are you friend or foe?’, but rather ‘are you good or bad?’ There can be no doubt that this elaborate formula implies some level of disapproval for the activities of pirates as ‘bringers of evil’.

The kinds of misfortune which pirates (or heroes) can cause are vividly illustrated in other parts of the poem. In Book Nine Odysseus describes how he and his men, on their way back from Troy, attacked the Kikones. Their intention was to kill the men, enslave the women and capture as much booty as they could, escaping by sea before large forces could be assembled against them.¹⁵ In Book Fourteen, however, a more positive view of pirates is presented by Odysseus, pretending to be a Cretan, when he tells the story of his rise to a position of prominence in Cretan society through successful piracy. As a result of his prestige he partakes (reluctantly) in the Trojan War. Next, and also in Book Seventeen, he recounts his final piratical voyage, to Egypt, where again the intention was to kill the men, capture the women and children, and amass as much plunder as possible.¹⁶ Violent plundering of this kind is seen as both praiseworthy and (from the victims’ point of view) damnable. It brings prestige and high status to the successful pirate, in much the same way as success in battle does for the hero,¹⁷ but it also brings misery and suffering to the victims. It is noteworthy that on two of these occasions (against the Kikones and in Egypt) the raids end in disaster because of the unrestrained greed of the participants. The poet seems to be suggesting that they deserve to suffer for what they have done, which contrasts with the idea that pirates can be honoured and respected men.¹⁸ This ambiguous attitude to piracy persisted for a long time in the Greek world.

Did the Greeks of the archaic period practise piracy as widely as the *Odyssey* seems to suggest? There is abundant archaeological evidence for Greek trade and settlement across the Mediterranean in the archaic period,¹⁹ and it is unlikely that all interaction between Greeks and non-Greeks was of a peaceful nature. Later sources indicate that the Greeks kept their piratical ways when they ventured away from their homelands. The eighth-century founders of Zankle, later called Messana, in north-eastern Sicily, are called ‘pirates’ by Thucydides. According to Herodotus, the Phokaians who settled in Corsica in the mid-sixth century BC immediately began to plunder their neighbours, and Herodotus also says that the first Greek settlers in Egypt, who fought as mercenaries for the Pharaoh Psammetichos I c. 660 BC, originally sailed there in search of plunder. Strabo, writing in the first century AD, reports the claim of the third-century writer Eratosthenes that the voyages of the early Greeks were made for both trade and plunder.²⁰

It begins to be possible to differentiate between warfare and piracy near the end of the archaic period. There is a general trend from the archaic into the classical period towards the development of organized states with citizen and/or mercenary armies which engage in more sophisticated, large-scale forms of warfare with political as well as predatory motives. The activities of Polykrates, tyrant of Samos (c. 546–522 BC), characterized by Herodotus as plundering, amount to a kind of early imperialism. He apparently had a fleet of 150 warships and 1,000 bowmen, whom he used for plundering raids against the islands and cities of Ionia. He was also an ally of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amasis (570–526 BC) against the Persians. His employment of a large fleet and army, and his capture of many cities, are characteristic of warfare, rather than piracy.²¹ When the Ionian Revolt against Persia (499–494 BC) was in

progress at the beginning of the fifth century, the inadequacy of piracy as a method of conducting a war was brought home to the Greeks. A raid against Sardis carried out in 498 BC by an allied force of Ionians, Eretrians and Athenians served only to aggravate the political situation, and the various piratical enterprises of Histiaios of Miletos achieved nothing of value for the Ionians.²²

A greater variation in warfare developed in the classical period. In the fifth century there were still some campaigns and conflicts in which plunder seems to have been a strong motive,²³ but the wars of the Greeks against the Persians and between the Greek city-states involved organized violence on a scale which far exceeded anything in the archaic period. This was the argument advanced by Thucydides when he claimed that the Peloponnesian War (431–404 BC) was the greatest conflict the Greek world had ever seen, surpassing the Trojan War and the Persian Wars.²⁴ Piracy still had a place in Greek warfare in the classical period. During the Peloponnesian War both sides used forces, which are described as *leistai* by Thucydides, to plunder their opponents' territory by land and sea.²⁵ As the war dragged on, some Athenian generals resorted to the methods of pirates in order to finance their war effort. Alkibiades is a prime example of the general turned plunderer. In 410–409 BC he plundered the territory of the Persian satrap Pharnabazos, and especially the Greek cities of the Hellespont. In 408 BC he sailed to the Greek islands of Kos and Rhodes to obtain money by force.²⁶ Unlike mere 'pirates', generals rarely found it necessary to use violence in such circumstances, since the sheer size of their forces was usually enough to intimidate the local people. By the 340s BC Demosthenes could take it for granted that everyone knew about this primitive 'protection racket'.

All your generals who have ever sailed from here (or, if not, may I suffer any penalty) take money from the Chians and Erythraians, from whomsoever, I say, they possibly can among the people living in Asia. Those who have only one or two ships exact less than those who have a more powerful fleet. The providers do not give their large or small contributions for nothing (they are not so crazy) but on the understanding that they will not be harmed when they leave harbour, nor plundered, or that their ships will be escorted, that is the sort of thing expected. They speak of 'favours' being granted and that is what they call their gifts.²⁷

A similar approach to war finance can be seen in the Hellenistic period. Philip V of Macedon, needing considerable funds to build up his navy, 'commissioned' the Aitolian Dikaiarkhos to attack merchant vessels and some of the smaller islands in the Aegean in order to raise money.²⁸ Plundering remained central to the conduct of warfare in the Greek world.

Another way in which the violent traditions of the Greeks encouraged piracy was through the custom of *reprisals*. The ancient Greeks generally accepted the idea that anyone who had suffered an injury of some kind could take action in reprisal against the injurer. The growth of city-states and the clearer definition of communities in the archaic period seems to have encouraged the development of the idea that reprisals could be taken against any member of another community, whether or not he was responsible for the original injury. The word *sylan* is often used to describe the right of reprisals, although the Greeks used a variety of expressions, all of which implied

the same thing—the seizure of booty, including people, by force, in reprisal for some injury. The explanation which Thucydides provides of the purpose of the Delian League of 477 BC is a good example of the idea of taking reprisals against an enemy, in this case the Persian King, by ravaging or plundering his territory.²⁹ This customary practice was, however, open to abuse in many ways. The scale of the reprisal might heavily outweigh the original injury, action might be taken without real cause or reprisals might be taken against ‘innocent’ third parties.

The earliest evidence of reprisals comes from the eleventh book of Homer’s *Iliad*, where Nestor describes a raid on the Epeians in which he and his companions were ‘seizing things in reprisal’.³⁰ The raid escalated into a small war between the two sides, which may well have been a common scenario in the Greek world of the archaic period. For example, Herodotus says that the Spartans and the Corinthians cited several ‘injuries’, including the theft of a bronze corselet and a krater, inflicted on them by the Samians as justification for their attack on Polykrates in 525 BC.³¹ Most of our information about reprisals comes from the classical and Hellenistic periods, when the almost constant warfare and inter-state rivalry among the Greeks was accompanied by a great deal of activity in the form of ‘reprisals’. It is clear from literary and epigraphic sources that forcible seizures of goods and persons were very common, especially at sea or in harbours. Some attempts were made to regulate and restrict the practice of reprisals,³² but it remained a problem well into the Hellenistic period.³³

Declarations of reprisals were made simply by announcing that plundering was permitted, and there was no legal procedure required. It was, therefore, an easy and common recourse for those who felt that they had not got satisfaction in a dispute, or who were looking for an excuse to justify banditry or piracy. The fact that reprisals might not even have been declared against a particular state or community would not prevent opportunists who struck (in the best tradition of pirates) wherever the chance arose. In his speech *Against Timokrates* Demosthenes describes an incident of this kind. In 355 BC some Athenian ambassadors who were on their way to Karia in a trireme captured a ship from Naukratis in Egypt and seized 9 1/2 talents’ worth of property. It was decided by an Athenian court that, although the Athenians and Egyptians were not at war and had no current disputes, Athens’ friendly relations with Persia, from whom the Egyptians were in revolt, justified the seizure of Egyptian goods as plunder.³⁴ In 217 BC Skerdilaidas, an Illyrian prince who had been encouraged to attack the enemies of King Philip V of Macedon, by promises of rewards from the king, decided that he had been cheated by his employer and attacked whatever merchant ships he could find in reprisal. His intention was presumably in part to put pressure on Philip to satisfy his demands, but in the meantime he could ‘compensate’ himself from the proceeds of his plundering.³⁵

Reprisals constitute a significant area in which war and piracy overlapped in the Greek world. In 416 BC, for example, the Spartans, in response to continued raids from Athenians and their allies, announced that any of their own people who wished could plunder the Athenians.³⁶ In the next century, however, piracy by way of reprisal became a more serious problem, with greater numbers of declarations and more people involved in this form of piracy. A passage of Xenophon’s *Hellenika*, from the time of the Corinthian War, describes what was probably a typical pattern of events.

Eteonikos [the Spartan *barmost*] was back in Aigina, whose inhabitants had previously enjoyed normal trading relations with the Athenians. With the war now being openly fought at sea, however, and with the full agreement of the *ephors*, he invited those who were willing to plunder Attika. The Athenians, beset by these attacks, sent hoplites under the *strategos* Pamphilos to Aigina. They built walls to contain the Aiginetans and blockade them by land, and used ten triremes to cut them off by sea.³⁷

The Spartan admiral Teleutias was able to drive off the Athenian triremes, but the fortifications were held for several months. He then carried the attack to the Athenians, raiding the Peiraeus, carrying off ships and men, and then attacking vessels along the western coast of Attika. In 374 BC the Athenians were suffering from Aiginetan based pirates again.³⁸ The Aiginetans seem to have been ready and willing to take advantage of the war and obtain Athenian goods through piracy instead of trade. They may even have used the same ships for both activities. It should be noted that they do not seem to have had any specific quarrel with the Athenians at that time. Xenophon is careful to point out that they have previously been trading, not plundering, on their voyages to Attika. Now, however, there is justification for piracy—a Spartan declaration of reprisals. Perhaps the most significant aspect of this declaration is not its quasi-legal nature, but rather its implication that the Aiginetans can expect Spartan support for their actions, and this is just as well, since they also run the risk of Athenian retaliation, which sweeps them up into the mainstream of the war. Teleutias proceeded to sell his booty in Aigina, where there must have been quite a market for Athenian plunder. The Aiginetans were able to profit from the taking of reprisals in more ways than one.

There is abundant evidence for piracy and raiding in reprisal to be found in the sources for the Hellenistic period, especially in the *Histories* of Polybius. In some cases reprisals were taken in response to provocative raids or piracy by persons from another state, at other times they seem to have been chosen as a method of compensation for injuries of a less violent nature. Often the declaration of reprisals by one state might be a prelude or adjunct to warfare on a larger scale. In 220 BC a number of Greek states made accusations against the Aitolians as a result of their unprovoked acts of plundering, especially of sanctuaries, and piracy. The Akhaian League, a confederation of small states, meeting in their council, declared war and announced plundering in reprisal against the Aitolians.³⁹

The Aitolians became notorious in the Hellenistic period for their piratical ways. Thucydides, writing at the end of the fifth century BC, described them as still sticking to the old-fashioned Homeric values and seeing no reason to disapprove of piracy.⁴⁰ In the third century BC, at a time when there was considerable rivalry between the Hellenistic kings and their allies, the Aitolians began to expand their 'confederation' by bullying and intimidating their neighbours, until they controlled a large part of central Greece, with access to the sea on both the eastern and the western sides. According to Polybius they were addicted to piracy and plundering, being unable to maintain peaceful relations with other states and constantly looking for opportunities to satisfy their violent and rapacious instincts. He uses the occasion of a meeting between the Roman general Flamininus and various Greek leaders in 197 BC to present a critique of Aitolian behaviour, through the complaints addressed by King Philip V of Macedon to the Aitolian representative. The king complains of a law which allows the Aitolians to 'take

booty from booty'. This is explained as permitting Aitolians to plunder not merely their own enemies in a war and the enemies of their allies, but even the allies themselves, or indeed any state which is involved in a dispute with another state.⁴¹

For Polybius the Aitolians and their allies represent the most anarchic form of Greek piracy. They cannot control their greed and so they practise piracy anywhere they can, with or without justification. His accusations need to be treated with caution, however, since he was an Akhaian, and his account of Hellenistic politics is biased against the enemies of the Akhaians, especially the Aitolians. The practice of labelling a political opponent or rival a pirate, or the associate of pirates, or accusing him of practising piracy, goes back to the classical period. In the fourth century BC Demosthenes attacked Philip II of Macedon in several speeches, calling him a pirate, or claiming that he was encouraging pirates. In response the Macedonian king and his supporters accused the Athenians and their generals of piracy. Demosthenes himself was called a *leistes* by one of his political rivals.⁴² Thus, when Polybius calls Nabis, the Spartan ruler c. 207–192 BC, a cruel and oppressive tyrant, and describes his habit of extorting money from rich citizens by torture and then claims: 'The rest of what he did during his rule was much the same as this. For he took part in piracy with the Cretans, he filled the Peloponnese with temple-looters, robbers, murderers,'⁴³ he is not to be taken entirely on trust. His account of Nabis is deliberately constructed to present him in the worst possible light. The Roman historian Livy follows Polybius' lead in his portrayal of Nabis, repeating the accusation of piracy in a speech attributed to the Roman general Flamininus.

'You arranged not only an alliance with Philip our enemy, but, if the gods may allow, you even fixed a close union through Philokles, his prefect, and waging war against us, you made the sea around Malea unsafe with pirate ships, and you captured and killed almost more Roman citizens than Philip, and the coast of Macedonia was safer than the promontory of Malea for the ships carrying provisions to our armies. Refrain, therefore, if you please from boasting about trust and the rights of alliance, and, putting popular oratory aside, speak as befits a tyrant and an enemy.'⁴⁴

This fine display of historical rhetoric is intended to discredit Nabis in the eyes of Livy's readers. The accusation of piracy may well have been a contemporary one, as is suggested by Polybius' mention of it, but that does not mean it was an accurate representation of Nabis and his policies. A recent assessment of the Spartan 'tyrant' argues that he promoted trade and the development of commercial ties with the Cretans.⁴⁵ As has already been mentioned, in the Greek world no one ever claimed the title 'pirate', it was a pejorative label applied to others.⁴⁶ The subjective nature of the distinction between war and piracy is well brought out in a story from antiquity of an encounter between Alexander the Great and a captured pirate.

For when the king himself asked the man, what reason he had for making the sea unsafe, he replied with uninhibited boldness: 'The same reason as you have for the whole world. But since I do it in a small ship, I am called a pirate. Because you do it with a great fleet, you are called an emperor.'⁴⁷

The concentration on the relationship between war and piracy in the discussion above does not mean that there was no piracy in the classical and Hellenistic periods which was not connected with warfare. Small bands of pirates with one or two ships were probably found all over the Greek world, but their activities rarely came to the notice of our literary sources, and so they are almost undetectable in the historical record. Only from casual mentions or occasional references in inscriptions can any information be obtained about this kind of piracy. For example, the following extract from a private oration by Demosthenes refers to an incident which took place around 369 BC, when Lykon of Herakleia was on his way from Athens to Libya.

But misfortune befell this Lykon, so that as soon as he had set out on the voyage across the Gulf of Argos he was attacked by pirate ships, his goods were taken to Argos, and he was shot with an arrow and later died.⁴⁸

This episode is mentioned by Demosthenes only because Lykon had deposited a sum of money with the Athenian banker Pasion before leaving, and a dispute arose over its disposal. Nothing more is said about the pirates. An inscription from the island of Delos, dating perhaps to the mid-second century BC, offers a less depressing glimpse of the dangers of piracy.

To Zeus Ouranios and Astarte of Palestine and Aphrodite Ourania, the gods who listened to him, from Damon, son of Demetrios, of Askalon, having been saved from pirates in payment of a vow. It is not allowed to produce a goat, a pig, or a cow for sacrifice.⁴⁹

This short inscription records a dedication to the gods mentioned which Damon seems to have promised for their help in saving him from pirates. Who was Damon? He may, perhaps, have been a merchant travelling to the slave market on Delos, but we cannot tell for certain. Nor is it possible from the limited information to discover who the pirates were, or where he encountered them. It is, however, likely that there were many thousands of similar adventures involving travellers and pirates across the Greek world which have left no trace at all in the historical records. The ancient literary sources are particularly concerned with warfare, and in the Greek world warfare offered many opportunities for the practice of piracy. In addition, the numerous conflicts between Greek states and kingdoms hindered co-operation between them to suppress piracy. Only as a result of the intervention of the Romans in the Greek world did these conditions change.

TRADE AND PIRACY

Trade and piracy have a lot in common. They are both ways of accumulating wealth, and they can both involve the transportation of goods and/or persons by sea over long distances. In the *Odyssey* the most important difference between trade and piracy is one of status. Merchants and traders do not have the same high prestige as successful pirates. Odysseus is happy to recall his exploits as a pirate, real or imagined, but he takes the label 'merchant' as an insult.⁵⁰ The Phoenician traders who kidnapped Eumaios as a boy are portrayed as liars and cheats.⁵¹ This does not mean that all

merchants are contemptible, but they cannot achieve anything like the status of successful pirates. As the Greeks gradually became more adept at maritime trading in the late archaic and classical periods, they developed specific terms for types of traders, and created institutions and practices to facilitate trade. It is likely that the status of traders would have improved relative to that of pirates as these developments continued.⁵²

There is evidence from the archaic, classical and Hellenistic periods that piracy could pose a considerable threat to merchants. The pirates of Zankle, mentioned above, were ideally placed to attack and seize ships coming through the Straits of Messina, between Italy and Sicily. Herodotus says that Polykrates of Samos was accused by the Spartans and Corinthians of seizing goods and people on their way to the kings of Lydia in the sixth century BC, and Histiaios of Miletos seems to have made merchant ships his main target in the early fifth century.⁵³ Attacks on shipping in the Peloponnesian War have already been mentioned, as has the practice of encouraging others to prey on the traders sailing in and out of enemy territory, which seems to have been widespread in the fourth century.⁵⁴ Even where no one was actually at war, there might still be a gauntlet of pirates for cargo ships to run, as in the Adriatic in the mid-fourth and early third centuries BC.⁵⁵ The Athenians were particularly sensitive to attacks on grain ships coming from the Black Sea area, often providing a naval escort for these vital convoys.⁵⁶ It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the financial arrangements undertaken by seafaring merchants and traders were more elaborate and restrictive than those commonly used in classical Athens. Maritime loans (and the interest on them) were only repaid if the ship arrived safely at its destination and the cargo was sold. If not, the lender had to bear the full cost. Interest rates were very high, because of the dangers of shipwreck and piracy, and the contracts were sometimes very specific about the conduct of the voyage in order to minimize risk.⁵⁷

Skerdilaidas the Illyrian and Dikaiarkhos the Aitolian are two examples of 'pirates' in the Hellenistic period who attacked merchant ships, and there were many more, particularly from the Cretan cities in the third and second centuries BC. Strabo describes the method of the pirates who were based near Mt Korykos in Pamphylia in the second and first centuries BC. They reconnoitred the harbours and ports in the area to find out which merchants were going to sail and with which cargoes, then they attacked them at sea and plundered their ships.⁵⁸

How common were such attacks? Did they represent a serious threat to seaborne trade? It is hard to assess the impact of piracy on the maritime trade of the Greek world. It might be thought that widespread piracy would inevitably have a serious, detrimental effect on trade, but this is not necessarily correct. In the first place, pirates are themselves partly dependent on trade, since they need merchants to provide them with much of their prey, and even when they are not attacking commercial targets they still have to dispose of their plunder in markets of some kind. Aigina in the fourth century was apparently a market for plunder taken from the Athenians, as has already been mentioned. Some places may even have owed a certain amount of their prosperity to close co-operation with pirates, like the Pamphylian and Cilician cities which were the bases of pirates in the second and first centuries BC.⁵⁹ There can be no doubt that pirates had the potential to bring

maritime trade to a standstill at times,⁶⁰ but it would hardly have been in their interests so completely to terrorize merchants that they would not sail to certain places, or to force people to abandon coastal settlements for fear of attack. The relationship between pirates and their victims must have been rather like that of predatory animals and their prey. If there were too many of them, or they were too successful, they would soon exhaust the supply of victims and piracy would have to cease. The simplest way of avoiding this would be to move on to a new base and find new targets, as seems to have been the case with Dionysios of Phokaia, who abandoned Phoenician waters for the fresh spoils of Sicily.⁶¹

The slave trade provides a good example of the dependence of piracy upon trade. Slavery was widespread in the Greek world, but the slave trade received little attention from the writers of ancient Greek literature, partly, it seems, because they were embarrassed and offended by it, although they were aware of its importance. Piracy was not the main source of slaves in the Greek world, but the slave trade was an important source of income for pirates, who often took captives when they attacked people at sea or on the land.⁶² Some would have been ransomed, like the Athenian Phrynon of Rhamnous, who was captured in 348 BC, during the Olympic truce. Ransoming was only possible for those who could afford it, or could find someone to pay for them,⁶³ and thus avoid the alternative of being sold as slaves, which happened to another Athenian, Nikostratos, just a few years before Phrynon's capture. Ironically, he was pursuing some runaway slaves of his own at the time.⁶⁴

There are numerous references in New Comedy to the capture of free people by pirates, who then sell them as slaves. This can, to some extent, be explained by the advantages which resulted from such a scenario as regards the plot of a comic play, but it is also an indication that such incidents were commonplace.⁶⁵ Slaves might be transported over considerable distances for sale, lessening the likelihood of their recovery, or, in the case of free persons, who might more easily be recognized or run away if they were nearer to home, their possible release or escape. Crete was apparently a popular market-place in the Hellenistic period, and not only for those pirates who were based in the Cretan cities. An inscription from Athens, dated to 217/16 BC, honours Eumaridas, a Cretan from Kydonia, who spent a great deal of money (over 20 talents) ransoming some Athenians who had been captured by an Aitolian, Boukris, and taken to Crete for sale as slaves.⁶⁶ Some cities developed networks of alliances and diplomatic agreements with Cretan communities which afforded them with opportunities to rescue any of their citizens who fell into the wrong hands. An inscription from the Asian city of Miletos, dating to the mid-third century BC, shows that the Milesians had a treaty with Knossos, which forbade the citizens of either city to purchase free persons or slaves who had been taken from the other city. A further nineteen Cretan cities had agreed to the same treaty. The Eumaridas inscription indicates that he was involved in further negotiations between Athens and several Cretan cities in an attempt to arrange treaties.⁶⁷ The effectiveness of such treaties depended on the willingness of the authorities in the cities concerned to enforce them. The close relationship between piracy and the slave trade continued well into the first century BC, encouraged in part by the continual demand for slaves from the richer parts of the Mediterranean world. Strabo accounts for the early success of the Cilician pirates in the second century BC by referring to the slave trade.

The export of slaves greatly encouraged them in their wickedness, since it became profitable for all concerned. The slaves could be obtained easily, and not far away there was a big and prosperous market, Delos, capable of taking in and sending out 10,000 slaves every day, hence the saying which arose: 'Merchant, sail in, unload, everything has been sold.'⁶⁸

It is also likely that the Cilicians were helped by the extra demand for slaves which was produced by the economic development of Roman Italy in the second and first centuries BC. As with war, so with trade, the social and political conditions of the Greek world enabled pirates to exist and prosper.

SUPPRESSION OF PIRACY

Since piracy was a serious problem in the Greek world, threatening the security and prosperity of many individuals and communities, it might be thought that attempts would have been made to suppress it by some of the more powerful and commercially developed states. Suppression of piracy will only be effective if the pirates' bases are eliminated, as the Roman law of 100 BC quoted above indicates. The suppression of piracy becomes a subject for historical analysis only from the classical period onwards, when piracy is sufficiently distinct from warfare and perceived as a possible threat to trade. The literary sources of the fifth and fourth centuries show a clear appreciation of the idea of suppression and its potential benefits, but there is little evidence of any positive action having been taken.

The historian Thucydides, writing at the end of the fifth century BC, suggested that the first attempt to suppress piracy in the Greek world was carried out by the legendary Cretan king Minos. After describing Minos' conquest of the Karians and his establishment of a thalassocracy in the Aegean he says: 'It is likely that he cleared the seas of piracy as far as he was able, to improve his revenues.' The same idea, of improving revenues by suppressing piracy, is also attributed by Thucydides to the early Corinthians.⁶⁹ Did the Athenians put the idea into practice at the height of their power in the fifth century BC, to the benefit of all the Greek states of the Aegean? Many modern scholars have assumed that they did, making it a result of the activities of the Delian League/Athenian Empire, but the evidence to back this up is rather limited.⁷⁰

One of the early campaigns of the Delian League, against the island of Skyros in the northern Aegean in 476 BC, was supposedly a response to plundering of merchant ships by the local inhabitants, but the details of the version given by Plutarch are not very credible, and it looks like an attempt to justify Athenian imperialism. Thucydides simply says that the Athenians enslaved the population and colonized the island, without making any mention of piracy.⁷¹ A story in Plutarch's *Life of Pericles*, concerning a decree proposing a congress of Greek states to discuss, *inter alia*, the safety of the seas, is sometimes cited as evidence that the Athenians were protecting the Greeks from pirates, but the decree may have been a later forgery, and, in any case, proposing a discussion of safety at sea is not the same as suppressing piracy.⁷² On the other hand, two Athenian inscriptions recording treaties with allied communities from the 420s BC include clauses promising not to admit pirates or practise piracy. These seem to refer to plundering by way of reprisals which, as has already been mentioned,

was common during the Peloponnesian War, but such treaties may have had a more general effect of discouraging piracy from bases where Athenian influence was strong.⁷³ The Athenians were both victims and perpetrators of this kind of piracy, so it is hardly surprising that their attempts to restrict it were limited to the protection of their own interests, not the general benefit of the Greeks.

I do not think, therefore, that the Athenians were generally successful in suppressing piracy in the fifth century BC, especially as there is evidence that it was a considerable problem throughout the period of the Athenian Empire.⁷⁴ The only effective way to deal with pirates would have been to attack and overcome them at their bases. To some extent the Athenian Empire did restrict the activities of pirates, but, since there were many people in the Greek world who could have engaged in piracy at this time, it would need an enormous effort to remove more than a few of them.⁷⁵ No one had the resources to suppress piracy on their own, and, as the political history of the period amply demonstrates, co-operation among the Greek states was out of the question. Thucydides' references to piracy show the difference between theory and practice in Greek politics.

Nevertheless, the idea of suppression remained an attractive one. During the fourth century BC the issue of the safety of navigation was raised in political debate by Philip II of Macedon and his political opponents. Its significance is brought out in the speech *On the Halonnesos*, probably written by Hegesippos c. 343 BC. The island of Halonnesos had been captured by Sostratos the 'pirate', who was in turn expelled by Philip. The king claimed that the island belonged to him as a result of his conquest, but offered to give it to the Athenians, who claimed that it was theirs by right. Hegesippos warns the Athenians not to accept Philip's offer of 'co-operation' against pirates because this would be an admission of weakness on their part.

Regarding pirates, Philip says that you and he are duty-bound to co-operate in guarding against evildoers at sea, but what he is really after is to be established on the sea by your agreeing that without Philip you do not really have the strength to mount guard at sea, and, furthermore, by your giving him free rein to go sailing from island to island, stopping off on the pretext of guarding against pirates, corrupting the exiled islanders and taking them away from you.⁷⁶

Hegesippos shows more concern here for the preservation of Athenian prestige than for the effective suppression of piracy. Although the Athenians may have desired to 'mount guard at sea', the capture of Halonnesos was a prime example of their inability to control the islands of the Aegean, as they claimed to have done in the fifth century, and thus caused great embarrassment for those who opposed any co-operation with Philip, however beneficial it might be to Athenian interests. Political rivalry continued to prevent any sort of co-operation among the leading states of the Greek world against pirates, although there is evidence of some efforts by individual states in the late classical and Hellenistic periods. In 335/3 BC Athens dispatched some triremes under the command of Diotimos, 'to take guard against pirates', but nothing more is known about this expedition, nor is any more known about the sending in 331 BC by Alexander the Great of his admiral Amphoteros to deal with piracy around Crete. A colony founded by the Athenians in the Adriatic in 325/4 BC was partly

intended to provide a safe haven from attacks by 'Tyrrhenians', which may refer to Apulian pirates who were attacking ships crossing from Greece to Italy.⁷⁷ These were all small-scale measures, intended to meet specific requirements in particular places at particular times. There is no indication of a general Athenian policy of suppression, nor of any attempt by Alexander to take advantage of his domination of Greece to co-ordinate efforts to suppress piracy.

In the Hellenistic period piracy seems to have been an even greater problem for individuals and communities in the Greek world than it was in the classical period. The almost incessant wars which were conducted by the Hellenistic kings and their allies provided ideal conditions for the practice of piracy. Political rivalry between states consumed most of the armies and navies of the Greeks, and it also enabled pirates to shelter from the forces of one state in the harbours of another, and combatants were often happy to encourage piracy against their enemies. Pirates might not be able to win battles, but they could divert attention and resources from the main conflicts.⁷⁸ Abuse of the practice of taking reprisals, which has been discussed above, was also widespread, especially among the Cretans and Aitolians, and this led to more piracy in the eastern Mediterranean. Seaborne trade seems to have increased in frequency and volume in this period, providing plenty of opportunities for pirates to plunder merchant ships. It was the citizens of the smaller communities of the Greek world who were most vulnerable to attack and least able to defend themselves against pirates. An inscription of the early second century BC from the Athenian colony on the island of Imbros illustrates how sensitive the small islands were to the threat of pirates.

Decided by the people. Teleas, son of Aristokrates, of Kholargos proposed: Since Lysanias is benevolent towards the people, and, when there was a hostile attempt by some people against the island, he did not make light of it, nor shrink back from the danger to himself, but brought news of the descent of the pirates, therefore, so that the people may show their gratitude it is proposed: With good fortune, it has been decided by the people that Lysanias, son of Aristokrates, of Deradiotai, is to be praised, and he is to be crowned with a crown of gold...⁷⁹

In these circumstances the small states and islands sought the protection of larger states and monarchs where they could. Or else they tried to come to terms with the pirates who threatened their peace and prosperity.

The piratical activities of the Aitolians in the third century BC seem to have encouraged many states to conclude treaties with them, granting freedom from reprisals and general guarantees of safety to protect their citizens and their territory. The people of Teos asked for and received guarantees of safety from the Aitolians in 260 BC. In some cases the request was made with respect to a renowned temple or sanctuary, like that of Smyrna, granted *asylia* or freedom from reprisals by the Aitolians c. 246 BC. Such grants were usually accompanied by concessions from the requesting state as well, as in the case of Chios which granted *isopoliteia*, or citizen rights, to the Aitolians c. 255 BC. It has been argued that this represents a deliberate policy on the part of the Aitolians to use the threat of piracy as a diplomatic bargaining counter, a way of

increasing their political influence in the Aegean in the third century BC.⁸⁰ The Aitolians were not the only ones to whom appeals were made in this way. A letter survives from King Ziaelas of Bithynia recognizing the inviolability of the temple of Asklepios on Kos, in response to a special embassy from the Koans, *c.* 240 BC.⁸¹

Protection from pirates could also be sought from the monarchs of the Hellenistic kingdoms. The Ptolemaic kings maintained several naval bases in the Aegean and some of their personnel were involved in beating off attacks by pirates.⁸² There is, however, no evidence for a general Ptolemaic police of the Aegean, as has been suggested by some scholars.⁸³ The Egyptian kings concentrated their naval forces on the struggles with their Syrian and Macedonian rivals. Several kings from the Black Sea region were actively involved in protecting Greek merchants and travellers from pirates. Eumelos, king of the Kimmerian Bosporos, is singled out by Diodorus for praise in this regard.

On behalf of those who sailed to the Pontos he waged war on the barbarian tribes who were accustomed to plunder them, the Heniokoi and the Tauroi as well as the Akhaians. Thus he cleared the sea of pirates, so that not only within his own kingdom, but throughout nearly the whole world his magnanimity was proclaimed by the merchants, enabling him to receive the very finest of rewards for his good deeds.⁸⁴

These kings did not offer protection against local pirates purely out of the kindness of their hearts. They were anxious to attract and retain the trade which the Greek merchants brought to their kingdoms. It was simply rhetorical flattery to claim that their motives were entirely altruistic.

Similarly the Rhodians were motivated by the desire to protect their own traders and ensure their own security, but they earned fulsome praise from Diodorus for their efforts. 'Indeed, they attained such a position of power that they took up the war against the pirates by themselves, on behalf of the Greeks, and cleared the sea of their evil infestation.'⁸⁵ In the western Aegean the Rhodians seem to have faced considerable difficulty from 'Tyrrhenian' pirates, who presumably originated from Italy. One Rhodian inscription from the early third century BC mourns the deaths of three Rhodian brothers who died fighting Tyrrhenians and pirates, and in another a Rhodian deme, Kasareis, honours those of its inhabitants who fought on the island of Aigila, modern Antikythera, probably against pirates.⁸⁶ Rhodian prestige was greatly enhanced by their success in the Cretan War of 206–203 BC. The origins of this conflict are unclear, but the Cretans seem to have challenged the Rhodians' dominance of the Aegean in the late third century through piratical attacks on the islands which looked to Rhodes for protection. The Rhodians could not put an end to Cretan piracy, but they established a strong position on the island, concluding several treaties which required their allies to assist them in suppressing piracy.⁸⁷ In the first half of the second century BC they were important naval allies of the Romans and assisted them in dealing with piracy during the 190s BC, as is seen in the following passage from Livy.

Then the praetor sent two allied triremes and two Rhodian ones under the command of Epikrates to guard the straits of Kephallenia. The Spartan Hybristas

had been practising piracy there with the Kephallenian young men, and the sea was now closed to supplies from Italy.⁸⁸

Even at the height of their power, however, the Rhodians did not have the resources to suppress piracy over a large area or for any length of time. By the middle of the second century BC they were heavily dependent upon Roman support, and a second war with the Cretans ended in a humiliating intervention by the Romans.

The rules of Greek politics and the conditions of warfare were radically changed by the rise of the Roman Empire. Piracy was not immediately suppressed, but, under pressure from the Rhodians and others, the new masters of the Mediterranean gradually took on the role of 'keepers of the peace' by land and sea. Marcus Antonius the Orator was the first of several Roman magistrates who campaigned against pirates in the eastern Mediterranean from 102–66 BC.⁸⁹ Eventually the Romans brought relative freedom from piracy to the Mediterranean through their conquests and the establishment of the *Pax Romana*, a peace guaranteed by the military might of the Roman emperors. The establishment of a single political entity, the Roman Empire, brought an end to the conditions in which Greek piracy had flourished. Inter-state warfare was replaced by peaceful coexistence, under the watchful eye of the Romans, whose military might enabled them to attack and destroy pirates at their bases. Piracy did not entirely disappear from the classical Mediterranean, but it ceased to be a major threat to the lives and livelihoods of individuals and communities. Greek traders in the Roman Empire were far less likely to encounter pirates than their counterparts in the classical and Hellenistic periods, and the volume and intensity of seaborne trade was greater than at any preceding time.⁹⁰ When pirates did manage to establish themselves in a particular area, they were dealt with quickly and effectively by the Roman military forces, which the economic prosperity of the Empire helped to support.⁹¹ There may be some doubt as to the moral value of Roman dominance over the Greeks, but the suppression of piracy was clearly a major benefit for the whole of the Greek world.

NOTES

- 1 Hdt. 6.17.
- 2 E.g. the Anglo-American pirates in the early eighteenth century, many of whom had served on naval ships and privateers; see M.Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700–1750*, (Cambridge, 1987), chs. 5 and 6.
- 3 M.Hassall, M.Crawford and J.Reynolds, 'Rome and the eastern provinces at the end of the second century BC', *JRS* 64 (1974), 195–220.
- 4 This extract is from a translation by Prof. M.H.Crawford, based on a new edition of the text, to be published shortly.
- 5 As in the case of Dionysios of Phokaia, cited above, pirates need a base for their ships, and they can easily cover much greater distances than bandits, moving much faster. Ships can also provide pirates with the element of surprise, enabling them to

attack seaborne or terrestrial prey with little warning. It should also be noted that ships can be costly to build and maintain.

- 6 **ληστής** and **πειρατής**. *Leistes* is closely connected with *leis*, meaning ‘booty’ or ‘plunder’ *Peirates* probably derives from the verb *peira*, meaning ‘to make an attempt’ or ‘to try’.
- 7 See H.Ebeling, *Lexicon Homericum* (Leipzig, 1885), 986.
- 8 *SEG* 24 (1968), no. 154, line 22; *IG* XI.7.386, line 4; *SIG* no. 454, line 13.
- 9 E.g. Polyb. 4.2.8–9; 21.12. See Str. 14.3.2 for an example of the two words used as synonyms. There is no evidence that *peirates* ever had a different meaning from *leistes*.
- 10 E.g. Str. 11.2.12; Polyb. 21.12. A more neutral translation like ‘plunderer’ expresses this ambivalence, but does not fully convey the pejorative tone of the Greek words; see p. 181.
- 11 **καταποντιστής**. This word derives from the verb *katapontidzo* which means ‘throw into the sea’. The noun *katapontistes* first occurs in Isocrates (*Paneg.* 115; *Panath.* 12 and 226). It is also used by Demosthenes and Cassius Dio.
- 12 For a survey of the evidence and some speculations about the nature of Mediterranean seafaring before the archaic period see N.K.Sandars, *The Sea Peoples* (2nd edn, London, 1985).
- 13 A debate about the nature of Homeric society and its relationship to the contemporary Greek world has been going on for some time. See O.Murray, *Early Greece* (London, 1980), ch. 3; M.I.Finley, *The World of Odysseus* (2nd edn, London, 1977); O.Taplin, ‘Homer’, in *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. J.Boardman, J.Griffin and O.Murray (Oxford, 1986), for some recent views.
- 14 *Od.* 3.71–4; 9.252–5. Also in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, lines 454–5.
- 15 *Od.* 9.39–52. Is this war or piracy? Odysseus is a hero, and Homer does not use the word ‘pirate’ here, but the raid could easily be described as piracy. For ‘pirates’ in action see the references below and *Od.* 15.403–84.
- 16 *Od.* 14.222–65 and 17.418–44.
- 17 Note the importance of *booty* for Homeric warriors, e.g. *Od.* 5.37–40, where it is arranged that Odysseus collect some booty before he can return home as a hero from the Trojan War. Without booty the Homeric hero was incomplete.
- 18 Perhaps the point that is being made here is that the activity of pirates is not offensive to the gods as long as it is kept within certain limits, and that it is for a hero like Odysseus to know what these limits are. It may also be part of the explanation for Homer’s selective use of the term ‘pirate’ that it is never applied to Greeks (that is, ‘Akhaians’ in Homer) who are attacking *Greeks*. Pirates are foreigners (e.g. *Od.* 15.427), or Greeks plundering foreigners. Compare Herodotus’ description of Dionysios of Phokaia, quoted above. For a discussion of these issues see H.van Wees, *Status Warriors: War, Violence and Society in Homer and History* (Amsterdam, 1992).
- 19 See J.Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas* (London, 1980), for a survey of the evidence.
- 20 Thuc. 6.4.5; Hdt. 1.166; 2.152; Str. 1.3.2.
- 21 Hdt. 3.39; see also G.Shipley, *A History of Samos 800–188 BC* (Oxford, 1987), chs 4 and 5.
- 22 Hdt. 5.97–101; 6.5 and 26–30.
- 23 E.g. the unsuccessful Athenian expedition against the island of Paros led by Miltiades, the victor of Marathon, in 490 BC. This raid combined a political motive—punishing the Parians for siding with Persia—with a less noble one—obtaining money for the Athenians (Hdt. 6.132–5).

- 24 Thuc. 1.1–23. The early campaigns of the Delian League have been characterized as ‘piratical’ by some scholars, but they involved much more than just plundering. See R.Sealey, ‘The origin of the Delian League’, in *Ancient Society and Institutions. Studies presented to Victor Ehrenberg*, ed. E.Badian (Oxford, 1966), 233–55; A.H.Jackson, ‘The original purpose of the Delian League’, *Historia* 18 (1969), 12–16.
- 25 Thuc. 2.32 and 69; 3.51; 6.43–4; 7.42. See also pp. 183–94 on ‘reprisals’.
- 26 Plut. *Alk.* 29; Diod. 13.69.5.
- 27 Demos. 8.24–5.
- 28 Polyb. 18.54.8–10; Diod. 28.1.1. Compare the piratical alliance between Agathokles and the Apulians c. 295 BC: Diod. 21.4.
- 29 Thuc. 1.96. See A.H.Jackson, ‘The original purpose of the Delian League’, *Historia* 18 (1969), 12–16 on the difference between ravaging and plundering in this context. Herodotus explains the origin of the Persian-Greek wars in terms of a long series of reprisals at the start of his *Histories* (Hdt. 1.1–5).
- 30 *Il.* 11.674. This raid is discussed in detail in van Wees, *Status Warriors*, pp. 195–8.
- 31 Hdt. 1.70; 3.47–53.
- 32 E.g. the fifth-century inscription which records an agreement between the communities of Oiantheia and Khaleion, forbidding the seizure of the property of the citizens of either city in the harbour of the other; M.N.Tod, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1946), no. 34; translated in C.W. Fornara, *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War* (Cambridge, 1983), no. 87.
- 33 For a collection of material relating to reprisals see W.K.Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, vols. II and V (Berkeley, 1974 and 1991). There is extensive discussion of many aspects in P.Gauthier, *Symbola. Les étrangers et la justice dans les cités grecques* (Nancy, 1972).
- 34 Demos. 24.11–12. The goods became the property of the state and a tithe was paid to Athena. When large sums were involved it seems to have been easy to find an excuse.
- 35 Polyb. 5.95.
- 36 Thuc. 5.115.
- 37 Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.1–2.
- 38 Xen. *Hell.* 5.1.3–5; 5.1.21–4; 6.2.1.
- 39 Polyb. 4.2–6. Later the Spartans and Eleans, allies of the Aitolians, declared reprisals against the Akhaians: Polyb. 4.36.6. The Cretan War of c. 206–204 BC may also have originated in a declaration of reprisals by the Cretan city of Eleuthernai against the Rhodians (Polyb. 4.53.2).
- 40 Thuc. 1.5.3.
- 41 Polyb. 18.4.7–5.3. See also Polyb. 4.3–6 for catalogues of Aitolian excesses.
- 42 Demos. 4.23 and 34; 10.34; 12.3–4. Aesch. 3.253. See above on the piratical methods of fourth-century warfare.
- 43 Polyb. 13.8.1–2. Polybius also writes about the Cretans in terms similar to those he uses for the Aitolians, e.g. 4.8.11.
- 44 Livy 34.32.17–20.
- 45 See P.Cartledge and A.Spawforth, *Hellenistic and Roman Sparta: A Tale of Two Cities* (London, 1989), ch. 5.
- 46 The description of an individual as a ‘pirate’ in the sources for the Hellenistic period should, therefore, be treated with scepticism. E.g. Ameinias in Polyain. 4.18. Where pirates do crop up in accounts of wars or sieges they seem to play only a very minor role in the fighting, e.g. the pirates who accompanied Demetrios Poliorketes at the siege of Rhodes, Diod. 20.82–97.
- 47 Aug. *de Civ. Dei* 4.4.25; the earliest surviving version of this story is in Cic. *Rep.* 3.24. I can see no reason to think that it is genuine.

- 48 Demos. 52.5; compare the similar reference in Demos. 53.6.
- 49 *Inscriptions de Délos* no. 2305.
- 50 *Od.* 9.39–52; 14.222–34; 8.159–64.
- 51 *Od.* 15.403–84.
- 52 See C.M.Reed, 'Maritime traders in the archaic Greek world. A typology of those engaged in the long-distance transfer of goods by sea', *AncW* 10 (1984), 31–44.
- 53 Thuc. 6.4.5; Hdt. 1.170; 3.47–53; 6.5 and 26–30.
- 54 E.g. Diod. 15.3.1 (Evagoras of Cyprus in 386 BC); Demos. 18.145 and 19.315 (pirates 'blockading' Macedonian ports in the mid-fourth century BC).
- 55 Diod. 16.5.3; 21.4.
- 56 E.g. *IG*² nos. 408 (c. 330 BC) and 1628, lines 37–42 (326/5 BC). The problem of piracy continued in this region in the Hellenistic period as can be seen from the references to protective measures undertaken by the Greek cities and local monarchs: Diod. 20.25.2; Polyb. 4.50.3; 8.22; C.B.Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven, 1934), no. 25.
- 57 See P.Millett, 'Maritime loans', in P.Garnsey, K.Hopkins and C.Whittaker (eds), *Trade in the Ancient Economy* (London, 1983), 36–52.
- 58 Polyb. 5.95 and 101 (Skerdilaidas); Diod. 28.1.1 (Dikaiarkhos); Diod. 27.3 (Cretans); Str. 14.1.32 (Korykos).
- 59 See above on Aigina. On Pamphylia and Cilicia see Str. 14.3.2 (Side); Cic. II *Verr.* 4.21 (Phaselis).
- 60 See, for example, Diod. 15.3, where the piratical activities of Evagoras of Cyprus bring a halt to maritime trade in the area (386 BC).
- 61 See above p. 179; Aristotle places piracy (but not trade) in the same category as farming, hunting and fishing as primary methods of supporting life (*Pol* 1.1256a 35).
- 62 It is impossible to estimate the proportion of the slave trade which depended upon piracy, or, indeed, on any other source of supply. See Y.Garlan, 'War, piracy and slavery in the Greek world', in M.I.Finley (ed.), *Classical Slavery* (London, 1987), 7–21.
- 63 See, for example, the third-century BC inscription from Amorgos recording an honorary decree for two brothers who 'persuaded' pirates to release their (freeborn) prisoners, rather than take them away as slaves. *SIG* 521; M.M.Austin, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest* (Cambridge, 1981), no. 87. People who were already slaves were far less likely to be ransomed if captured.
- 64 Demos. 19.189 and 229; Aesch. 2.12 (Phrynon); Demos. 53.6 (Nikostratos).
- 65 E.g., Men. *Sik.* 3–7 and 355–9; Plaut. *Mil. Glor.* 118; *Poen.* 896–7; Ter. *Eun.* 114–15. Pirates perform a similar narrative function in the Greek novels of the imperial period.
- 66 *SIG* no. 535. Translation in Austin, *The Hellenistic World*, no. 88.
- 67 *I.Cret.* I, Knossos, no. 6; Austin, *The Hellenistic World* no. 89. The extent of the slave trade and the various alliances between Cretan cities and other communities is discussed in P.Brulé, *La piraterie crétoise hellénistique* (Paris, 1978), 16–29 and 70–105.
- 68 Str. 14.5.2. The figure of 10,000 (*myrios*) should not be taken literally. It simply means a large number.
- 69 Thuc. 1.4 (Minos); 1.13.6 (Corinthians).
- 70 E.g. Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*, p. 110; R.Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972), 153; S.Hornblower, *The Greek World 479–323 B.C.* (2nd edn, London, 1991), 30–1.

- 71 Plut. *Kim.* 8; Thuc. 1.98. Plut. *Per.* 19 does not necessarily refer to pirates. The strategic importance of Skyros is significant here, as it was probably a stopping-off point on the vital route to and from the Black Sea. Whether or not the people of Skyros deserved the label 'pirates', it may be that the Athenians were anxious to prevent the possibility of piratical attacks on grain ships coming from the Hellespont.
- 72 Plut. *Per.* 17. See R. Seager, 'The Congress Decree: some doubts and a hypothesis', *Historia* 18 (1969), 129–40. Some scholars suppose that the Athenian navy conducted regular 'patrols' against pirates, but this would have been an ineffective waste of resources, given the nature of ancient navies and communications.
- 73 *IG I³* nos 67 and 75.
- 74 As well as the references given above, see the mid-fifth-century inscriptions *SIG* nos 37 and 38 from Teos, in which pirates are assumed to be a common danger for a city which was a major tribute-paying member of the Delian League.
- 75 It should be remembered that the substantial fleet of the Delian League/Athenian Empire was mostly occupied with campaigns against Persia or other enemies in the fifth century. Pirates would have to be operating on a considerable scale, and posing a major threat to warrant diversion of the League's forces to deal with them.
- 76 [Demos.] 7.14–15. See also Demos. 58.53. This debate may provide a context for the forgery of the Congress Decree.
- 77 *IG II²* no. 1623, lines 276–85 (Diotimos); Q. Curt. 4.8.15 (Amphoterios); *IG II²* no. 1629, lines 217–33 (Adriatic colony); Diod. 16.5.3 (Apulian pirates).
- 78 For examples of pirates on the fringes of Hellenistic warfare see Diod. 20.82–97 (siege of Rhodes, 305 BC); Polyain. 5.19 and Front. *Strat.* 3.3.7 (Ephesos, 287 BC); Livy 31.22 (Chalkis 200 BC).
- 79 *IG XII.8.53*, lines 1–13. The inscription continues with further honours for Lysanias. Note the anonymity of the pirates.
- 80 *IG XI.1²* no. 191 (Teos); *OGIS* no. 228–9 (Smyrna); *SIG* no. 443=Austin, *Hellenistic World*, no. 52 (Chios). See H. Benecke, 'Die Seepolitik der Aitolier' (Diss. Hamburg, 1934).
- 81 R. C. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven, 1934), no. 25.
- 82 E.g. *IG XII.3.1291*, a mid-third-century inscription praising a Ptolemaic commander for help in defeating an attack on the island of Thera. The attackers seem to have been interested in capturing women and children for ransom or sale as slaves. See also *IG II²* no. 650, lines 15–16—a Ptolemaic escort for Athenian grain ships, c. 286 BC.
- 83 E.g. Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*, pp. 130–5.
- 84 Diod. 20.25.2; under the year 310 BC. See Polyb. 8.22 for similar praise of Kavaros, king of the Thracian Gauls. The letter from Ziaelas, king of Bithynia, mentioned above also promises to help the Coan traders sailing into the Black Sea region.
- 85 Diod. 20.81.3 under the year 305 BC.
- 86 *SIG* no. 1225; *Clara Rhodos* 2, p. 169, no. 1.
- 87 On the Cretan War see P. Brulé, *La piraterie crétoise hellénistique* (Paris, 1978), 29–56.
- 88 Livy 37.13.11, dealing with events of the year 190 BC. Epikrates never actually got as far as Kephallenia, but he did stop off at Delos and help to expel some 'pirates' who were using the island as a base. These people may well have been allies of the Rhodians. See *SIG* no. 582.

- 89 See Ormerod, *Piracy in the Ancient World*, ch. VI.
90 See K.Hopkins, 'Introduction' in P.Garnsey, K.Hopkins and C.Whittaker (eds), *Trade in the Ancient Economy* (London, 1983), ix–xxv.
91 E.g., *I.G.S.K.* Ilion, no. 102; Tac. *Ann.* 12.55; Jos. *B.J.* 3.9.1–4.

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MEDICAL TEXTS AS A SOURCE FOR WOMEN'S HISTORY



Helen King

In this chapter I would like to explore questions of how we can best use the available sources for women in the ancient Greek world, by looking specifically at the various ways medical texts have been, and can be, approached. The main source to which I will refer here is the Hippocratic corpus, a body of medical writings from the classical to the Hellenistic period, the gynaecological materials of which probably date to the fifth century BC. For purposes of comparison, I will also make reference to Soranus of Ephesus' *Gynaecology*, from the late first century/early second century AD, a period when, on the evidence of epigraphy, just under 90 per cent of 'those who call themselves doctors came from the Hellenistic East', and the work of the second-century Galen of Pergamum, the physician to Commodus and Septimius Severus.¹ As will become clear, these are very different types of source, and this has important implications for our use of them in women's history. Although these sources span 700 years and come from the very different cultures of classical Greece and the early Roman Empire, there is also an important sense in which they form stages in a developing and unitary Graeco-Roman medical tradition, in which Soranus' 'methodist' approach to gynaecology comes to prevail in the Latin West while Galen's humoral physiology dominates the Greek East. Galen self-consciously proclaims his grounding in the Hippocratic tradition, even as he creates that tradition in his own image by identifying as 'Hippocratic' only those texts in the corpus which most closely resemble his own medical ideals.²

All three sources are male, but then the sources for ancient women are, as it is now commonplace to state at the beginning of any article or book on the subject, almost entirely written by men.³ As Marilyn Skinner chronicled in a survey of the field written in 1987, this apparently simple observation at first led scholars to adopt a 'determined skepticism' and to restrict their work by concentrating on very small, discrete areas, shying away from any attempt at synthesis. The work of synthesis was instead left to the reader, facilitated by essays on 'women in antiquity' being grouped into accessible collections.⁴ It was accepted that access to ancient women would always be somewhat oblique. Skinner wrote, 'Real women...are not to be found so much in the explicit text of the historical record as in its gaps and silences.'⁵ The next stage was therefore to develop strategies by which the gaps could be filled and the silences heard. For this, those working on ancient

women have been able to draw on the epistemological insights and methodological tools of the discipline of women's studies, recognizing that all knowledge is 'culturally shaped and politically charged'.⁶

How should this brief historiographical sketch influence our reading of the ancient medical texts? It is worth noting that they were relatively late starters in the 'women in antiquity' field: in the first version of Sarah Pomeroy's bibliography, women in Greek medicine did not even merit an entry.⁷ This may reflect the invisibility of the medical literature of the ancient world in traditional classical studies, from undergraduate reading lists upwards.⁸ However, once medical writing began to be used in work on women in antiquity, its use posed, in a particularly vivid way, problems which exist for all ancient source materials. For example, how far is it valid to use ancient literary texts as a source for the reality of ancient women's lives? Is it possible to recover women's ideas and experience from male-authored texts, and if so, how should we go about doing this?

In what follows, I propose to look at three related questions. First, what general approaches to the sources have been used in studies of women in antiquity, and how would these suggest medical sources should be employed? This leads into the second question: who is doing the talking in the medical texts, and in what sense should we believe what they say? Finally, is it possible to recover women's experience from these texts?

FINDING THE LEVEL

A once popular way to study ancient women, and to account for the different images of women which may be present in two texts produced in the same city at almost the same time, or, perhaps even more significantly, within the same text, was to divide the available evidence into a number of 'levels' which could then be treated in different ways. The classic debate here was over whether fifth-century Athenian women were 'secluded' or allowed 'freedom': although this has become something of a historiographical curiosity,⁹ the questions it raised about how to use different types of source material remain pertinent. Surveying the debate in 1987, Versnel posed the abiding question: 'How is it possible for learned and intelligent researchers to come to such diametrically opposed views when using the same source materials?'¹⁰ The solution, he argued, had three aspects: first, the weighting given to different sources, especially when certain passages are taken out of context; second, the privileging of one genre of evidence at the expense of others; third, *a priori* assumptions about what the investigation will reveal, in particular the belief that the Athenians were 'gentlemen like us'.¹¹

The second aspect of Versnel's solution has appeared in a number of different incarnations. Writing about women in fifth-century Athenian drama, Shaw criticized the practice of isolating two main classes of evidence: first, that given by legal and historical material, in which women are 'defined as near slaves, or as perpetual minors', and second, literature and the visual arts, where women appear to have a prominent role.¹² He then proposed, only to reject, a number of possible solutions to the perceived discrepancy. These would either integrate all the available material

by giving different classes of evidence different weight, or discard one class of evidence while privileging another. Thus drama could be taken as practice, and law as theory; or drama as fantasy, law as reality. Alternatively, women in drama could be regarded as being based on epic models and so rejected altogether as a useful source for fifth-century Athenian practice and belief. Shaw concluded his section on methodology by setting up an opposition between 'literature' and 'life'. In his influential article of 1975, Just similarly tried to find a way to integrate all the available sources rather than privileging some and ignoring others. He did this through a more sophisticated and inclusive set of 'levels', 'social organisation', 'popular morality' and 'myth'.¹³ Gould later produced a variation on this: law, custom and myth.¹⁴

Other ways of allocating the sources have been suggested. David Cohen, again commenting on the seclusion/freedom debate, noted a lack of fit both in ancient sources and in contemporary Mediterranean societies between the ideal—women do not leave the house—and the actual—women do, for a wide range of activities. This led him to a different 'levels' approach, putting on one side the 'grand ideological statements' giving 'idealized visions of women' and, on the other, 'actual practice' revealed in the 'little bits of evidence about the details of women's lives'.¹⁵ The only problem with this approach is that the 'little bits of evidence' are usually only to be found embedded in the 'idealized visions'.

While accepting some sort of 'levels' approach to the sources, Shaw and Just also acknowledged that schemes such as these are essentially artificial, created by the analyst and not echoed by the social actors. Both also made reference to an underlying concept or 'image' of women, beneath contradictory sources. As Just wrote, 'There must have been some connection between the women of tragedy and the women of Athens'.¹⁶ It may be asked, however, whether the best route to this collective image of women lies through judging the available sources according to our own society's criteria of rationality and then integrating them into 'levels'. Such an approach produces both epistemological and practical problems; it raises questions about the way in which the individual is related to the collective representations of myth and to the social organization within which he or she operates—for all 'levels' are experienced by the same people—and it avoids the difficulty of agreeing on the criteria governing the 'level' at which any one source, or class of source, should be placed.¹⁷

Some recent work on ancient women has served to undermine the fragile foundations of a 'levels' approach to the sources. Inscriptions and lawcourt speeches may seem closer to 'reality' than the products of literature and philosophy, but it is increasingly recognized that this is only a superficial impression. For example, Anne-Marie Vérilhac has shown that funerary epigrams are far from being a mirror on 'reality'; instead, they operate under their own rules as much as do other literary texts. A man may be praised for what he does, a woman for what she is, in her appearance and her personal qualities.¹⁸ Claude Vial cautions the reader of fourth-century Athenian lawcourt speeches against the illusion that this type of material is any nearer 'reality' than is, for example, Athenian tragedy; they are instead public discourses, with strict conventions guiding what can, and cannot, be said, in which images of the female are used to influence the male jury.¹⁹ Winkler notes that lawcourt

speeches have ‘various kinds of spin and misdirection that qualify the meaning of such pronouncements in their full social context’, including ‘unspoken stage directions that are understood but not voiced by the social actor’.²⁰

I have argued elsewhere²¹ that the ‘problem’ of Greek women is not that different types of evidence give apparently different presentations of women: this is not the problem, but its solution, and it should be acknowledged rather than being obscured through the construction of ‘levels’. Just rightly draws attention to the conceptual roots of the problem when he asks, ‘What for the Athenians constituted “a woman”?’²² At its heart, the concept may be seen to be problematic: women overlap nature and culture, being seen as closer to the natural world, but having to be incorporated into civilization in order that it may be reproduced, while always remaining liable to throw off their training and return to the wild.²³ ‘Woman’, for the Greeks, was not a neat, clearly defined concept, but rather one characterized by a deep ambiguity, best exemplified in the mother of the ‘race of women’, Pandora, that ‘beautiful evil’.²⁴ Not only are there conceptual difficulties, there are also social factors to take into account; thus Versnel reminds us that ‘*the* Athenian woman’ does not exist, in that different levels of social status will always need to be brought into play.²⁵

How should we read the medical texts in the light of this? Where do they locate ‘woman’, and at what ‘levels’ have they been read? Are they closer to law, custom or myth? Is their content best characterized as ‘grand ideological statements’ or ‘actual practice’?

Historically, the ancient medical texts have been placed firmly on the side of ‘practice’. This is at least partly because, up to the mid-nineteenth century when Emile Littré published his edition of the Hippocratic corpus, ancient medicine was seen as having a direct input into contemporary medical practice.²⁶ Recent work on the Hippocratics can operate with the same assumptions; for example, Girard presents them as giving ‘a concrete idea’ of ‘the daily life of women’, providing insights into women’s diet, family life, sexual habits, domestic activities and diseases.²⁷ Rousselle goes even further, believing that the Hippocratics give us direct access to women’s ideas; she sees the Hippocratic materials as passing on traditional women’s remedies, transmitted from mother to daughter over the years, but then written down by men. She writes, ‘the little we know from ancient doctors’ writings about women’s bodies is precious, particularly their reports of the questions women asked and their ideas about their own bodies.’²⁸

This is a doubly deceptive passage: it implies not only that we have direct access to women’s questions and women’s ideas, but also that the ancient medical writers are ‘reporters’. Before returning to the issue of whether or not these sources give women’s ideas, it is therefore necessary to decide on the status of them as texts. What are the male authors trying to do in these texts, and should we take their comments at face value?

SILENT WOMEN, TALKATIVE MEN

Whether or not there are female oral traditions behind the texts, what remains of ancient medical writing is certainly male-authored. Where ancient women speak in these texts, they are the creations of male writers. This is additionally complicated

for the medical writers of the classical world by the convention that women are traditionally presented as being reluctant to speak. In the Hippocratic *Diseases of Women*, the writer of one section tells us that women are prevented by youth, inexperience and embarrassment both from knowing what is wrong with them and from telling a doctor if they do know.²⁹ A rare exception is the model patient Phrontis, who is described as having examined her vagina and reported an abnormality to the Hippocratic physician. It is worth noting here that Rousselle uses Phrontis as her sole evidence to support the statement that, 'In general, women examined themselves when they were in good health.' Does one swallow make a summer?³⁰ In Galen's *On Prognosis*, we find the great man trying to apply the techniques of the Hippocratic treatise of the same title; it is vital to question the patient, but the woman whose insomnia is eventually shown to result from an infatuation with the dancer Pylades 'replied hesitantly or not at all, as if to show the folly of such questions, and finally turned over, buried herself completely deep in the blankets, covered her head with a small wrap and lay there as if wanting to sleep'.³¹ Galen's triumph in the case is, however, assured when he shows how her body tells the story her mouth refuses him; the erratic pulse at the mention of Pylades shows her emotions.

Women are silent: it is men who claim to elucidate their bodies for us. In Jack Winkler's words, these men are part of the wider social group of 'male law-givers—medical, moral, or marital'.³² The Hippocratics share with Soranus and Galen a keen sense of the authorial ego; the Hippocratics repeat, 'There are some who think this, but I think the opposite,' 'I order the patient to do this,' and 'But I say...',³³ while Soranus lists the practices of his predecessors and contemporaries at length to show that his methods are better and Galen has a particularly strong belief in his own superiority over anything else on offer in Rome or elsewhere. In the face of this certainty Winkler argues that we should respond by becoming 'resisting readers', 'reading against the grain', seeing through 'men's talk' as 'calculated bluff'.³⁴ If this approach is applied, specifically, to the medical texts, it can be supported from the feminist critique of scientific discourse exemplified by Donna Haraway, who shows that 'science is a contestable text and a power field' and points out that there is a strong element of bluff in modern scientific writing, where scientists 'tell parables about objectivity and scientific method to students in the first years of their initiation' but would not themselves be caught dead acting on such parables.³⁵

We could not be further here from the traditional ways of reading ancient medicine, where the sources have been pre-selected for us by generations of copyists and scholars with their own questions and their own ideas of valid ways of answering those questions. For the Hippocratic texts, the traditional questions have concerned the identification of the 'genuine works' of the Father of Medicine and the construction of 'schools' of medicine to which the treatises of the corpus can be assigned. Valid ways of answering these questions have ranged from the highly subjective—picking the texts seen as giving the best medical theories or therapies according to the standards of your own time or your own personal taste—to the apparently more objective, most recently through computer analysis of the vocabulary.³⁶ What Haraway argues is that all knowledge is 'situated'; there is no one global, objective view. This applies to the ancient medical texts as much as to our own readings of them; however,

because of the style in which they are written, through the persona of the objective, all-powerful male observer, this can be difficult to perceive.

In finding ways to 'read against the grain', some classical scholars have, for many years, found it valuable to use comparative materials both from other historical cultures and from contemporary simple societies. Winkler's *Constraints of Desire* makes use of Mediterranean anthropology, but there is a much older tradition of selective use of cross-cultural comparison in classical studies.³⁷ Comparative analysis raises awkward questions about the status of the texts themselves. Here I am not thinking so much of specific comparisons between the ancient Greeks and another culture—for example, between the Spartans and the Zulus as warrior societies³⁸—as of the problems of knowledge raised by the whole anthropological enterprise, in which the anthropologist uses a series of native 'informants' in order to produce his/her version of their culture for the consumption of other outsiders. Not only do our 'informants', whether these are the anonymous writers of the Hippocratic corpus, Soranus or Galen, insist that their information is correct and everyone else is wrong, but they also present—or are made by later commentators to present—a clear and integrated vision of the body in which no symptom is without meaning.

This makes their stories very attractive to us as readers. The Hippocratics have many 'theories' of disease, often directly opposed to each other. Where women are concerned, variations occur within a common framework in which women are wetter than men, their flesh being of a looser, more absorbent texture. Soranus and Galen give us logically consistent theories; for example, in Soranus, all revolves around a basic distinction between tight, constricted conditions and those which are loose and relaxed. Thus a therapy for a female patient who shows signs of constriction—including loss of voice, seizure of the senses, pulling up her limbs and laboured breathing—will begin with a relaxing process including treatments such as warm compresses, massage with olive oil and baths. The patient may then be moved on to 'passive exercise', including swimming, sea voyages and swinging.³⁹

Even more attractive to the reader is the case history; these do not feature in Soranus, whose methodist approach to medicine holds that the doctor should not base his treatment on experience alone. In Galen, however, the case history has a central place: Nutton comments on 'Galen's skill as a narrator of case histories'.⁴⁰ In the seven books of the Hippocratic *Epidemics*, case histories include named patients, the progress of whose diseases is charted day by day. For example,

A woman of the household of Pantimides took a fever the first day after a miscarriage. Tongue was parched; thirst, nausea and insomnia, bowels disordered, the stools being thin, copious and raw. Second day: rigors, high fever, much purgation; did not sleep. Third day: pains more intense. Fourth day: became delirious. Seventh day: died. The bowels were relaxed throughout, the stools being watery, thin, raw and voluminous; urine little and thin.⁴¹

The presentation of this story in what appears to be note form is very different from the polished literary product which is the Galenic case history, although in both cases the author makes choices⁴² in telling his story; here, he thinks it is significant that the disease followed a miscarriage, but does not regard as important the events

of the fifth and sixth days. Lonie has studied the Hippocratic case histories as examples of early literacy, in which we find evidence of 'the observer's private and unexpressed sense of what is interesting, relevant, of what may turn out to be useful'.⁴³ Langholf has shown that some passages in the Hippocratic writings may be best understood as 'the lecture notes of one or several medical teachers', others as notes taken on special occasions, such as animal dissections.⁴⁴ Others include questions addressed to the author himself, as an *aide-mémoire*: for example, 'Did this happen because...?' Langholf notes, however, that such questions are phrased *within* the dominant theories; there is even evidence that the data of observation are adjusted to fit the theory, so that when the crisis in a disease fails to come on the day predicted by the theory of 'critical days' the writer simply states '*around* the twentieth day...'⁴⁵ I have argued elsewhere that the case of the daughter of Leonides in the *Epidemics*, in which a nosebleed is followed by death—thus contradicting the theory of the Hippocratic aphorism which states that a nosebleed is beneficial in cases of menstrual suppression—may also be read as a defence of the theory, the reason for the exceptional event being given as the youth of the patient, whose body's internal channels are insufficiently developed to cope with the diversion of blood.⁴⁶ The case history may thus be selective, and a reflection of theory, but the presentation of medical writing in this format makes it seem closer to 'actual practice' than to 'grand ideological statements': the authoritative persona of the author and the attempts to produce all-encompassing theories also contribute to this effect. Can we try to 'read against the grain' here?

The medical writers' insistence on being right, taken with the presentation of a clear and integrated vision of the body in which every symptom makes sense, recalls the anthropologist Victor Turner's key informant, Muchona.⁴⁷ Despite the stated discrepancies between Muchona's explanations for ritual and those given by other members of Ndembu society—both ritual specialists and participants—Turner's fieldwork was swayed by the rounded, coherent and systematized world-view offered by Muchona. Turner wrote that Muchona's explanations for the plants and other substances used in ritual were 'always fuller and internally more consistent' than those given by other ritual specialists, yet other Ndembu said, 'He is just lying'.⁴⁸ Turner regarded Muchona as being better able to see the totality of Ndembu cult practice, because of his marginal social status, but it is equally possible that Muchona's testimony should be discredited as the work of an outsider desperately seeking to be accepted. It is striking that Muchona's descriptions of ritual and explanations of meaning are accepted by Turner even when these are at variance with the latter's eye-witness evidence.⁴⁹

It should be noted that Muchona was himself a healer, belonging to three women's cults which cured reproductive disorders, and was 'more at ease among women than men'.⁵⁰ Are the healers of the Hippocratic corpus perhaps in an analogous position? We have no way of knowing whether their therapies were used widely, rarely, or even never. The situation is thus more difficult than is usually acknowledged. It is not simply that 'our knowledge of past realities is dependent on past observers whose cultural lenses may be unclear to us';⁵¹ these observers may even be seen as liars by their fellow members of society. Their lies may then be further filtered through the work of modern scholars and through our own expectations.⁵²

HEARING WOMEN'S VOICES

Outside the medical context, there is usually considerable pessimism about the possibility of recovering women's voices from ancient texts. Just writes that, 'It may well have been, then, that beyond the dominant ideology of the male, which purports to account for society in its totality, there existed in Athens another social reality constructed by women in which not only their own role and nature, but also those of men, might have been construed in a significantly different fashion.' He concludes, however, that the evidence for this is not recoverable: we cannot know how Athenian women felt, how they saw their society and their place in it.⁵³

Rousselle, in particular, has however argued for an oral tradition of women's knowledge and women's remedies lying behind the Hippocratic corpus: she writes of 'an empirical science' coming from women who 'made the most detailed observations of their own bodies' and collected facts 'patiently over the years'.⁵⁴ The long lists of remedies at the ends of sections of the text *Diseases of Women* are among the features which distinguish Hippocratic gynaecology from other Hippocratic texts. Are the Hippocratic gynaecological writings based on women's knowledge, and can we hear women's voices through the remedies given?

In spite of their desire to bolster their own authority, and their statements that women are silent due to embarrassment, the medical writers of antiquity do not present women as being entirely without knowledge. Women do have knowledge of their own bodies, and the male doctor must defer to this. In particular, women 'know' when they have conceived by a sensation in their womb or because they see that the seed stays within the body. In *Flesh* 19 the writer describes public *hetairai* as the source of such information. He opens by saying that people will ask how he knows the amazing things he is telling, such as the 'fact' that all parts of the foetus are formed after seven days in the womb: the authority for such information is claimed to be partly women themselves—'as for the rest, I know only what women have taught me'—and partly his own eyewitness evidence based on seeing the products of abortion.⁵⁵ In the famous case of the entertainer and prostitute in the Hippocratic *On Generation*, she 'had heard the sort of thing women say to each other, that when a woman is going to conceive, the seed remains inside her and does not fall out. She digested this information, and kept a watch.'⁵⁶

Aristotle too gives information on women's 'feelings': many have 'choking feelings and noises in the uterus' just before a period, and they have a distinctive sensation in the flanks and groin if they have conceived.⁵⁷ The writer of the tenth book of *Historia animalium* notes several times that women emit 'seed' at the culmination of erotic dreams.⁵⁸ Neither tells us how he knows what women dream or feel, although Rousselle states that the latter 'must have received his accounts of the sensations they experienced from women themselves'.⁵⁹ The possibility must also be admitted, however, that the writers made up these stories to impress their audience.

However, not all women are thought to 'know'. Doubts are sometimes cast on women's information; for example, in the case of a woman who claimed to have miscarried a male child at twenty days, 'If this was true, I don't know,' and, in another case, 'so she said'.⁶⁰ Fatty and bilious women, unlike women in general, are not thought to know whether they have conceived,⁶¹ while the author of the

tenth book of *Historia animalium* questions whether any woman who says she emitted seed after a dream, but claims that her vulva remained dry, can be telling the truth.⁶²

There is no Hippocratic passage which attributes to women the therapeutic recipes given; the suggestion that these remedies are women's own is based on the belief that this is the sort of information mothers should pass on to daughters. There are, moreover, counter-arguments. First, looking at the components of the recipes may cast some doubt on such assumptions. As von Staden has shown, a prominent feature of these recipes is the use of 'dirt': bird excrement and mouse droppings inserted into the vagina, mule excrement, goat dung and hawk droppings drunk in wine.⁶³ These substances are not used in the treatment of men. Are these recipes from an ancient oral female tradition, or an expression by men of women's impurity? Second, there are some recipes which, by their flamboyant and exceptional nature, may owe more to the competitive social climate of Hippocratic medicine putting pressure on its practitioners to innovate. For example, one recipe uses a turtle's liver, removed while the turtle is still alive, then ground up in a woman's milk.⁶⁴ Third, the range of ingredients is suggestive. Are rare, costly ingredients such as Egyptian perfume, myrrh and oil of narcissus likely to feature in a list of women's home remedies, or are they instead used by Hippocratic physicians to impress?⁶⁵

What is the standing of the recipes in general? It is difficult here to distinguish between symbolic efficacy and practical efficacy; does rubbing the affected part with seal oil 'work' because seal oil is a soothing lubricant substance, or because seals are the animals seen as having reproductive organs most like those of a human female, or because, in Aristotle, seals are liminal, between sea and land?⁶⁶ Does a fumigation—a lengthy treatment in which vapour is passed into a woman's womb to return it to its proper position—work simply because the process of setting up the treatment and making the woman patient the centre of attention somehow makes her feel better?⁶⁷ And what do we mean by 'work' if we reject the theory making the treatment necessary?

One area of efficacy which may seem more amenable to testing than many is that of contraceptives and abortives. Even here, caution is in order; just because a plant is now proved to contain active elements does not mean that these were extracted sufficiently effectively to 'work'. It is necessary to take into account factors such as the soil, the amount of rainfall and the time of harvest.⁶⁸ The traditional position on the efficacy of ancient contraception is simply that, due to the practice of polypharmacy, by which several different agents were used simultaneously, it is impossible to know.⁶⁹ However, with Rousselle's proposal that 'All the explanations given are women's explanations: the doctor repeats them,'⁷⁰ a different debate has emerged here. On the one hand, there is the argument that the contraceptives given are indeed women's 'knowledge', but that the knowledge is mistaken. Angus McLaren states that the contraceptive recipes of antiquity were 'clearly "female knowledge" of which male writers were simply the chroniclers' but does not believe the recipes worked other than to give women the illusion that they were in control of their own bodies.⁷¹ On the other hand, Riddle has recently tried to show that the ancient contraceptives would indeed have worked, arguing that the recipes are based on 'rational observation by women', which is then

recorded by men who fail to understand what they are writing, giving as ‘ways to draw down the menstrual blood’ what are in fact early stage abortifacients.⁷² He even argues that the one oral contraceptive given in the Hippocratic corpus may have worked, although only for one month rather than the one year stated in the text. This is *misý*, copper ore, which he suggests would be excreted in urine and faeces, thus contaminating the vagina, thence being absorbed into the lining of the womb, where it could prevent implantation.⁷³

The debate over whether women’s voices may be heard through the pharmacopoeia thus remains open. The assumptions made have a clear influence on the results obtained: if we believe that women’s traditions will be nothing but superstitious rubbish, we will attribute to women the recipes which seem unlikely to work, and to men those which we now understand as having some scientific basis. If a higher valuation is given to the female tradition, then we may wish to argue that, if it works, it must be the product of wise-women but, if not, it must derive from some punitive male fantasy. Ann Hanson has put forward a valuable compromise here. While agreeing with Rousselle that the recipes ‘were the possession of women’, ‘passed down orally from generation to generation’,⁷⁴ and that the source of this tradition is the ‘experienced’ woman, she would regard the role of the Hippocratic writers as being to provide ‘a coherent anatomy, physiology, and pathology’⁷⁵ for the pre-existing therapies, but one in which their own intervention plays an essential part.⁷⁶ Thus the texts in their present form combine female experience and male theory, but integrated in such a way that it may no longer be possible to separate the two.

Is it possible to hear women’s voices in another way, through the case histories and physiological descriptions of these texts? One area of debate here is the use of female medical personnel: how were they used, and were they effective? Here we may take one of Galen’s most famous cases: the wife of Boethus, given in *On Prognosis* 8.⁷⁷ She suffers from ‘the so-called female flux’, which she is reluctant to discuss with ‘the top doctors, of whom I was universally acknowledged to be one’ and instead consults ‘her usual midwives, who were the best in Rome’. There is no improvement, and Galen is eventually given sole control of the case by her husband.

The details given by Galen of this case are such that, it has been argued, it can be used as evidence for women’s diseases in the Roman Empire. Nutton suggests that the cause of the condition could be an incomplete abortion, but notes that Galen rejects this diagnosis. It is possible, Nutton then argues, that this is a pelvic abscess arising from an infection of the Fallopian tubes; if so, then once it has burst and discharged there would be no further need for treatment.⁷⁸ This would mean that Galen’s actions in the case—a series of treatments aimed at drying and warming the patient, including the highly unusual therapy of rubbing her whole body with honey—are completely irrelevant, in medical terms, as the wife of Boethus is already ‘cured’. Galen of course has no way of knowing whether her Fallopian tubes have been so badly damaged by the infection that she will be infertile: Boethus pays him 400 gold pieces after she has been free of the flux for just one month. Socially, however, the ‘grand gesture’ of this treatment may boost her morale.⁷⁹

The case can also be used as evidence for the different types of health care available in a large city of the Roman Empire. Galen mentions not only ‘the best’

midwives, but also 'Her chief nurse, whom we considered an excellent woman'.⁸⁰ Is this evidence for the high level of competence of female health care providers? Caution is necessary here; we must always recall Galen's context. Why is he telling us this story in the first place? Because it is the 'one really remarkable case which gave me earlier the title of "wonderworker" to go with that of "wonderteller", as many doctors called me'.⁸¹ The women healers mentioned *must* be good, or Galen's own brilliance will shine less brightly. On the other side, the women attendants of the patient are criticized; when the wife of Boethus faints in the bath, Galen tells them 'to stop standing uselessly about, just screaming'.⁸²

The evidence for women as health care providers is thus far from straightforward. In the Hippocratic corpus, women in such roles are very rarely mentioned; there is an *omphaletomos*, 'cord-cutter', a few *akestrides*, healers who help in labour, and a *iatreousa*, 'female healer',⁸³ but it is generally assumed that midwives were in control of normal labour, Hippocratic *iatroi* being called in when something went wrong.⁸⁴ The paucity of references to midwives in Hippocratic writers may be due to separate spheres, but it may also be due to the Hippocratic way of working, presenting themselves as the only option available, and referring to the opposition only when strictly necessary; for example, to attack them.

It would be unwise to argue from the lack of midwives in the Hippocratic corpus, to Galen's 'best midwives' and 'excellent' nurse, and Soranus' job description for the ideal midwife—literate, trained in the theory of all branches of medicine, unafraid and robust⁸⁵—and to suggest a vast improvement in the competence of female medical personnel between the Hippocratics and the early second century AD. This type of argument, neglecting any consideration of the context of production of the source, is precisely that used by Rousselle. For example, it is generally agreed that one source of information on the female body used in Hippocratic medicine was prolapse of the womb, an occasion on which the invisible inside becomes visible without the need for dissection.⁸⁶ Rousselle says of a passage in the *Gynaecology* of Soranus, 'When Soranus reveals that prolapse had become rare in this society, this shows us that as well as fewer births there were also fewer pregnancies'.⁸⁷ In fact Soranus says that prolapse happens rarely but that there are many possible causes, while Galen says prolapse happens 'in many women' who overuse the expulsive faculty of the womb.⁸⁸ It may be debated whether it is possible to make any quantitative statements from texts of this kind.

If women as healers are virtually invisible in medical texts, usually appearing only in order that the male writer can score a point, searching for women as patients may seem a lost cause. However, by close textual scrutiny it may be possible to detect their presence.

Diseases of Women singles out 'experience of the diseases arising from menstruation' together with age as the main factors making a woman into a reliable patient.⁸⁹ From the information the Hippocratics expect a woman patient to supply, it seems that she is expected to have detailed knowledge of her own menstrual cycle. There are treatments which must be completed 'by the time the menstrual period comes';⁹⁰ this can be achieved because the woman is expected to know 'the days on which she normally purges herself',⁹¹ 'on what days her period came',⁹² the usual length of time for which she menstruates⁹³ and when her period is about to start.⁹⁴ Some very fine

distinctions are drawn, with several stages of the menstrual period being distinguished as times to carry out treatment. These include ‘before the menses come’,⁹⁵ ‘during the menses’ or ‘while the menses are flowing’,⁹⁶ ‘when the period is ending’,⁹⁷ ‘at the moment when the period stops’,⁹⁸ ‘when the period has finished’,⁹⁹ ‘after the period’¹⁰⁰ and ‘when the menses have come and gone’.¹⁰¹ Some surprisingly precise distinctions are ‘when the period is stopping but is still flowing, rather than when it has disappeared’;¹⁰² a reference to menses which ‘announce themselves, but do not come’¹⁰³ and another to those which ‘show themselves but do not come’;¹⁰⁴ and one to those which ‘show themselves and then are gone’.¹⁰⁵

Do we see here ‘little bits of evidence’ for real female patients, armed with an impressive knowledge of their own bodies, or a ‘grand ideological statement’ about the ideal patient? One way of trying to answer this question is to use comparative evidence to investigate whether the regular predictability of this image of menstruation is plausible. I would argue that doubt may be cast in particular on three features of Hippocratic and later ancient medicine: first, the statement that menarche occurs at thirteen; second, the expectation of heavy menstrual loss; and third, the expectation of regular monthly bleeding.

Amundsen and Diers argued that menarche in the ancient world occurred at the age of thirteen (in the fourteenth year), but their figure is based solely on what the ancient medical writers—themselves relying on repeating earlier authorities, rather than any sort of statistical survey—tell us.¹⁰⁶ The figure must be treated with caution because of its basis in ancient number theory. The ages of human life can be split into units of seven, a patterning which occurs in Aristotle and in the Hippocratic *Coan Prognoses*.¹⁰⁷ Amundsen and Diers, while accepting that this explains forty-two as the age traditionally given for menopause, nevertheless claim that fourteen for menarche was based on ‘physical observation’.¹⁰⁸

As for the quantity of blood expected to be lost, Lesley Dean-Jones has drawn attention to the figure given in the Hippocratic texts for the normal blood loss in menstruation: 2 Attic cotyls, or a pint, in two or three days.¹⁰⁹ This is very high indeed in terms of modern expectations, a point which may lie behind LSJ’s decision to propose a different meaning for *kotyle* here, and here alone, of one eighth of a pint.¹¹⁰ The figure of 2 cotyls shows extraordinary persistence; it is repeated in Soranus, although he gives it as the *maximum* loss rather than the norm.¹¹¹ Why pick 2 cotyls? Dean-Jones has shown that this is also the normal maximum recommended capacity of a uterine clyster in these texts; it seems that 2 cotyls was taken as the capacity of a non-gravid uterus.¹¹² In fact, the capacity is 2–3 fluid ounces. She argues that it is the *theory*—that women have a womb full of blood and that the capacity is 2 cotyls—which leads to the expectation of such heavy loss.

As far as regularity is concerned, the terminology of menses and *katamenia* demonstrates the expectation of monthly loss, and Dean-Jones argues that many women would indeed have been bleeding every month.¹¹³

I would instead propose that the whole package of early menarche, heavy loss and regularity is highly unlikely to reflect reality, and should instead be understood as part of a ‘grand ideological statement’ about the nature of the female. The physical mechanism of menarche is still not fully understood, although most medical writers today would include body fat, environment, class and genetic factors as contributors.

In twentieth-century Western society nutritional improvements and the eradication of certain diseases have combined to produce menarche in the twelfth or thirteenth year.¹¹⁴ But what of past societies? Data from rural historical communities and from contemporary simple societies suggest a rather different picture from that given in ancient medical texts. In rural Sri Lanka, pre-contact Australia and eighteenth-century England and Wales menstruation was apparently both scanty and infrequent.¹¹⁵ Gilbert Lewis writes of the Gnaou that menarche is as late as eighteen, menstruation usually occurs at intervals of over two months, while marriage shortly after menarche together with frequent pregnancy and breastfeeding make 'the monthly character of menstruation less apparent'.¹¹⁶ Angel, although using only very small samples, suggests that ancient Greek women who died as adults had on average given birth between four and five times.¹¹⁷ To this period of about forty months of amenorrhea should be added the effect of breastfeeding. Lactational amenorrhea depends on the intensity of suckling, in particular whether feeds continue throughout the night, but the effect can last from three to eighteen months and, on occasion, even longer.¹¹⁸ In a famous passage from the early fourth century, Euphiletos describes how he assumed that his wife was getting up in the night and going downstairs in order to feed her baby, when in fact she was seeing her lover.¹¹⁹

However, if ancient women would not have menstruated in the way expected of them, then why were they expected to do so? Aristotle claimed that 'in some women the menses come regularly each month—in the majority every third month.'¹²⁰ Even counting inclusively, this must mean that he expected the majority to bleed at greater than 28-day intervals. Yet the Hippocratics expect regularity, and intervene quickly when a period seems to be overdue. This is because their theory of the female body holds that women's wet and spongy flesh collects blood all month, then pours it out.¹²¹ A missed period is impossible in this theory; the blood must still be in the body, 'hidden' somewhere,¹²² perhaps putting pressure on a vital organ.¹²³ Blood lost must equal the imagined capacity of the womb; the loss must be regular, otherwise the next month's blood will have nowhere to rest before leaving the body. In this case, in reality women would probably not have bled as heavily or as regularly as expected, and the patient whose cycle is so regular that she can predict it becomes a construct.

To conclude, I want to suggest some areas in which the 'grand ideological statements' may have incorporated some opportunities for playing the system, whereby the female patient could be more than the passive object of male words and practices. It was believed that the child born in the eighth month—that is, after seven full months have been completed—never survived, while the child born in the seventh month might or might not survive. Aristotle comments on the oddity of this belief, contrasting it with Egypt, where no such idea is found. In Greece, he says, most eight-month babies die, simply because any eight-month baby who *lives* is assumed not to be a true eight months' child, the women assuming that they made a mistake in their calculations.¹²⁴ Hanson has shown how, by calling a child born dead 'an eight months' child', mother, family, birth attendants and doctor are all exonerated of any blame, feelings of guilt or accusations of negligence.¹²⁵ The only obstacle here is the Hippocratic claim that women 'know' precisely when they have conceived; the writer of the treatise *On the Seven Months' Child* states

that it is women who insist that the eight months' child never survives,¹²⁶ and who claim that, if the eighth month passes badly but the child survives to be born in the ninth or tenth month, then that child will be lame, blind or otherwise handicapped.¹²⁷ It appears that a woman could hastily revise her estimate of the time in the womb of a child born dead or damaged, while a child born alive but appearing sickly could be labelled a 'seven months' child' to prepare all concerned for the possibility of his or her death.

The principle of the treatise *On the Seven Months' Child* is that the theory of critical days, by which a crisis can be predicted to appear on specific days in the progress of a disease, applies equally to health and death in all, encompassing conception, miscarriage and childbirth.¹²⁸ The most important days are the first and the seventh; uneven days are generally important and, among even days, the numbers 14, 28 and 42 are significant, together with multiples of three and four. Does this represent the Hippocratic doctors' attempts to bring women's experiences under the umbrella of their 'critical days' theory, followed by women playing the system for their own benefit?

A further example is where *On the Seven Months' Child* says that the first and seventh days after conception are the most likely for miscarriage;¹²⁹ here, a woman bringing on an abortion could avoid questions by saying, 'It is the seventh day since I felt myself conceive.' In therapy, the woman patient is asked by the Hippocratic practitioner whether or not her womb is tilted; the answer that it is no longer tilted will end the treatment.¹³⁰

What then do we hear, between the talkative men with their persuasive global theories and vivid case histories, and the glimpses they permit us—through their own cultural lenses—of women? It is men who tell us that women are embarrassed to speak of their diseases, and it is men who tell us that women provide them with information on their dreams and their physical sensations at conception. How do we make sense of this? By creating more 'levels', saying that women are silent about disease, talkative about their normal lives? Or by arguing that here we have another example of the inherent ambiguity of the Greek category 'woman': wild but tamed, essential yet unwanted, silent but talkative, 'knowing' but lying? Or are these talkative men simply lying to us, claiming women speak, in order to give authority to their own theories? Which is the 'calculated bluff' here: the statements of women's ignorance and silence, or of their knowledge and information? I would suggest that both types of source are equally 'grand ideological statements', but employed in order to give different types of authority to the male writer.

NOTES

- 1 Hippocrates, cited in the edition of E.Littré, *Oeuvres complètes d'Hippocrate*, 10 vols (Paris, 1839–61; reprinted Amsterdam, 1961–2), abbreviated as L with volume number and page number; Soranus, cited in the translation of O.Temkin, *Soranus' Gynecology* (Baltimore, 1956), based on the edition of J.Illberg, *Sorani Gynaeciorum Libri IV* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1927)=CMG IV; Galen, cited in the edition of C.G.Kühn, *Opera Omnia*, 20 vols (Leipzig, 1821–33; reprinted Hildesheim, 1964), abbreviated as K

- with volume number and page number. On doctors coming from the Hellenistic East, see V.Nutton, 'Healers in the medical market place: towards a social history of Graeco-Roman medicine', in A.Wear (ed.), *Medicine and Society* (Cambridge, 1992), 15–58: the cited passage is on 25.
- 2 W.D.Smith, *The Hippocratic Tradition* (Ithaca, 1979). See also P.Brain, 'Galen on the ideal of the physician', *South African Medical Journal* 52 (1977), 936–8; V.Nutton, 'Galen in the eyes of his contemporaries', *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 58 (1984), 315–24.
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- 25 Versnel, 'Wife and helpmate', 64.
- 26 Littré 8.2, on *Diseases of Women*: 'Ce tableau des affections utérines qui affligeaient les femmes grecques, il y a plus de deux mille ans, est tout à fait semblable à celui que nous avons présentement sous les yeux; et il est évident que rien, dans leur existence, ne les mettait, plus que nos femmes, à l'abri de ces maladies si fréquentes et si pénibles.'
- 27 M.-C.Girard, 'La femme dans le corpus hippocratique', *CEA* 15 (1983), 69–80.
- 28 Rousselle, *Porneia*, 2.
- 29 *Diseases of Women* 1.62 (L 8.126).
- 30 *Diseases of Women* 1.40 (L 8.96–8). Manuscript C has 'If *phrontis* is present...' I would argue for the proper name here, given as a female name in *Iliad* 17.40, and a male name in Pausanias 10.52 and *Odyssey* 3.282, thus making it particularly appropriate for a woman who is to be trusted. On Phrontis, Rousselle, *Porneia*, 25. There are however other passages which she could have cited, such as 1.59 (L 8.118) and 2.155 (L 8.330), where women are described as recognizing that there is a problem by examining the mouth of the womb and finding it narrow and moist, and 3.213 (L 8.410) in which self-examination shows that the mouth of the womb is closed or tilted.
- 31 Galen, *On Prognosis* 6.2–10 (ed. V.Nutton, *Galen on Prognosis*, CMG V.8, 1 (Berlin, 1979), 100–3).
- 32 Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 6.
- 33 On competition in Hippocratic medicine, see G.E.R.Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge, 1979), 89ff. See also *Diseases of Women* 1.63 (L 8.128); 1.34 (L 8.78); 2.133 (L 8.286); 3.220 (L 8.424); *Nature of Woman* 6 (L 7.320).
- 34 Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 4 and 126.
- 35 D.Haraway, 'Situated knowledges', *Feminist Studies* 14 (1988), 575–99:576–7.
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- 37 Winkler, *Constraints of Desire*, 8–10; see P.Culham, 'Ten years after Pomeroy: studies of the image and reality of women in antiquity', in Skinner, *Rescuing Creusa*, 9–30; 9–14 discusses anthropology in relation to ancient religion. The classic discussions remain those of M.I.Finley, 'Anthropology and the classics', in *The Use and Abuse of History* (London, 1971), 102–19 and S.C.Humphreys, 'Classics and anthropology', *Didaskalos* 4 (1974), 425–41, reprinted in her *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London, 1978), 17–30. See also Just, *Law and Life*, 2–4 and Versnel, 'Wife and helpmate', 70–8.
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 - 42 L.Pearcy, 'Diagnosis as narrative in ancient literature', *AJP* 113 (1992), 595–616: see especially 600 and 605.
 - 43 I.M.Lonie, 'Literacy and the development of Hippocratic medicine', in F.Lasserre and P.Mudry (eds) *Formes de pensée dans la collection hippocratique. Actes du colloque hippocratique de Lausanne, 21–26 septembre 1981* (Geneva, 1983), 145–61, 155; see also Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience*, 154–5.
 - 44 Langholf, *Medical Theories*, 141 and 145.
 - 45 Langholf, *Medical Theories*, 186–90; 209.
 - 46 *Epidemics* 7.123 (L 4.544) and *Aphorisms* 5.33 (L 5.468); King, 'The daughter of Leonides' and A.E.Hanson, 'The logic of the gynecological prescriptions', in J.A.López Férez (ed.), *Tratados Hipocraticos. Actas del VII^e Colloque International Hippocratique, Madrid 1990* (Madrid, 1992), 235–50:236.
 - 47 V.W.Turner, 'Muchona the hornet, interpreter of religion', in J.B.Casagrande (ed.), *In the Company of Man: Twenty Portraits by Anthropologists* (New York, 1960), 333–55; see also V.W.Turner, *The Ritual Process* (London, 1969), 69.
 - 48 Turner, 'Muchona the hornet', 339 and 336.
 - 49 Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 69; Muchona says that the white clay (=semen) and the red clay (=maternal blood) should both be in the snail shell, yet when Turner saw the ritual they were kept in separate containers.
 - 50 Turner, 'Muchona the hornet', 345 and 343.
 - 51 M.di Leonardo, *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge: Feminist Anthropology in the Postmodern Era* (Berkeley, LA and Oxford, 1991), Introduction, 30; see also the 'reflective screens' approach of S.Ardener (ed.) *Perceiving Women* (London, 1975), xxii.

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- 54 Rousselle, *Porneia*, 24 and 26.
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- 65 Egyptian perfume, *Diseases of Women* 1.78 (L 8.190); 1.84 (L 8.208); myrrh, *Diseases of Women* 1.82 (L 8.204); oil of narcissus, *Diseases of Women* 1.80 (L 8.198–200).
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- 81 Nutton, *Galen on Prognosis*, 111.
- 82 Nutton, *Galen on Prognosis*, 113.
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- 92 *Diseases of Women* 2.133 (L 8.298).
- 93 *Diseases of Women* 1.8 (L 8.34).
- 94 *Diseases of Women* 1.8 (L 8.34); 1.9 (L 8.38).
- 95 *Diseases of Women* 1.61 (L 8.124).
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- 97 *Diseases of Women* 1.23 (L 8.62); 3.230 (L 8.444).
- 98 *Diseases of Women* 1.89 (L 8.214).
- 99 *Diseases of Women* 1.37 (L 8.92).
- 100 *Diseases of Women* 2.206 (L 8.398); 3.221 (L 8.428).
- 101 *Diseases of Women* 3.230 (L 8.438).
- 102 *Diseases of Women* 1.11 (L 8.46).
- 103 *Diseases of Women* 2.133 (L 8.302).
- 104 *Diseases of Women* 2.133 (L 8.302). This may be a reference to the idea, found in *Historia animalium* X, that normal menstruation involves a white discharge at the beginning and/or end of the period (634a30–2), which is like milk and odourless (634b18–19).
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- 128 *Seven Months' Child* 9 (L 7.448).
- 129 *Seven Months' Child* 4 (L 7.442).
- 130 King, 'Producing woman', 109 on *Diseases of Women* 2.133 (L 8.284–6), cf. 2.146 (L 8.322).

WOMEN AND BASTARDY
IN ANCIENT GREECE
AND THE
HELLENISTIC WORLD



Daniel Ogden

Were ancient Greek bastards (*nothoi*) the children of men, or the children of women? The question is not intended biologically, but sociologically: which relationship was more significant for a *nothos*, and which contributed more to the definition of his role in society at large—that with his father, or that with his mother? One might have taken the impression from two recent studies that it was the relationship to father that was the more important:

The term almost always defines the status of the relationship towards the father, not the mother, while nowadays we concentrate equally if not more so on the mother of extra-marital children. Ancient authors thought primarily about men; women did not normally interest them. It was from the point of view of the man and his *oikos* that the status of his various sexual partners and the children resulting from the corresponding unions was viewed.

(Lotze 1981:169)

The *nothos*...was a paternally recognised child with a place in his father's household.

(Patterson 1990:50)¹

I do not deny the importance of a *nothos*'s relationship with his father, but it is the purpose of this chapter to argue that *nothoi* as individuals were conceived of as having a stronger relationship with their mother than with their father, and that they acted accordingly. We shall investigate the ways in which, in Greek culture, the status of a bastard was closely identified either with that of his mother, or with women generally in the society into which he was born. First, we shall see that bastards often shared the same fate as their mothers in myth; second, that in the fluid legitimacy-dynamics of Greek royalty, whether in the imaginary world of Euripidean tragedy or the actual one of Hellenistic monarchies, the status of royal offspring rose and fell with that of their mothers; third, that the general condition of civic bastards in different Greek societies loosely correlated with the general status of women in those societies.

MYTH

Greek myth is replete with bastards, most of them the sons of gods fathered on mortal women. Mother and bastard child are often turned over to the same fate,

being enclosed together in a container and put out to sea:² thus, Danae and Perseus,³ Semele and Dionysus,⁴ and Auge and Telephus.⁵

Hecateus says that Herakles slept with Auge when he came to Tegea, and in the end she was found with his child, and Aleos shut her and the boy in a chest and sent them out to sea.

(Pausanias 8.4.9)

The fate in itself is the same, but contextualized differently for mother and child. For the bastard, enclosure and abandonment is the *ekthesis* (exposure) of an unwanted child: Hesychius glosses *ek larnakos: nothos* ('out of a chest: bastard'). For the mother however the experience is rather akin to a chastity-ordeal by water; note the proverb that '[sc. only] those of the female sex still purely virginal are [sc. successfully] submerged in the sea.'⁶

In Greek thought bastardy was often associated with deformity or physical inadequacy, particularly lameness: Xenophon tells how in 400 BC Lysander successfully persuaded the Spartans, to the benefit of lame Agesilaos and the disadvantage of the purportedly bastard Leotykhidas, that an oracle forbidding lame kings (*khole basileia*) metaphorically forbade bastard kings;⁷ Plato imagines that *nothoi* souls are crippled and lame;⁸ *itba(i)genes*, literally 'straight-born', means 'legitimate'. The reason for this association is possibly that, of male children at any rate, deformity and bastardy were held to be the two principal reasons for exposure.⁹

This deformity closely binds the bastard Kypselos and his mother Labda in Herodotus' mythically schematized narrative of the former's tyranny at Corinth (5.92). Labda was lame (*khole*), and so married outside the strictly endogamous Bacchiad aristocracy that ruled the city: given to the Lapith Action, she could only bear, in Bacchiad eyes at any rate, a bastard.

Herodotus makes Labda's lameness an integral part of his story; her name also evokes this deformity, indicating, according to the Etymologicum Magnum, that her feet were splayed outwards like the letter (however the letter form could also describe her twisted *leg*).¹⁰ By significant contrast her father, Amphion (i.e. *amphi-ion*), 'went on both feet'.

Kypselos closely resembled his mother in her lameness. Herodotus derives his name from the beehive (*kypsele*)¹¹ in which his mother hid him from his Bacchiad exterminators (in a quasi-exposure),¹² but the name can be associated equally well, if not better, with the bird *kypselos*, a kind of sandpiper, also known as the *apous*, 'footless',¹³ so that the bastard's own name also denoted his deformity. The oracles that Herodotus quotes at 5.92ß confirm the imagery of birds and lameness: Kypselos is born of an eagle (*aietos*, a reference to his Lapith father, 'Action');¹⁴ furthermore, he will become an *olooitrokhos*, a rolling stone (lameness is frequently conceived of as causing a rolling gait in Greek thought),¹⁵ and in overthrowing the Bacchiads he will metaphorically transfer his own lameness to them, by 'slackening their knees' (*hypo gounata lysei*).¹⁶

The bastard is most graphically associated with his mother's inferior status, as being the child of a woman only, in a series of myths of parthenogenesis by the goddess Hera. Zeus and Hera competed in the autonomous production of offspring: Zeus, as sole father, produced a perfect offspring in Athene, but Hera, as sole mother,

could only produce deformed monsters, monsters that expressed their bastardy in lameness: Hephaistos and Typhon. Hera complains of Hephaistos:

And he [Zeus] begat grey-eyed Athene apart from me, who excels all the blessed immortals, but halting among all the gods was born *my* child Hephaistos, withered of feet, whom I begat myself alone...and picked him up and threw him into the broad sea.

(*Homeric Hymn to Apollo* 314–18)¹⁷

There could be no more eloquent expression of the idea that the bastard and the deformed are *women's* children: to be legitimate and perfect, one must be the son of a *man*:¹⁸ the concept of legitimacy is revealed as one by which men usurp the primacy of women in the production of children. In the version quoted, Hera expelled Hephaistos because of his deformity; in another Homeric version it was the expulsion itself, by Zeus this time, that mangled his limbs (e.g. *Il.* 1.590–4).¹⁹ In this second version Hephaistos is associated with his mother in his lameness, since the reason for his expulsion is that he saved his mother from being strung up by Zeus with (his own?) disabling anvils attached to her feet; and note that in protecting his mother Hephaistos shows a typical bastard's priority. (A Callimachean novelty later had Hephaistos as bastard *qua* extramarital child of Zeus and Hera.²⁰)

Typhon likewise was a monster that was all that Hera (or her doublet Earth) found herself able to produce without Zeus: he was human in form to the thighs, but thence down coiling vipers. Thus Typhon too suffered from twisted lower limbs.²¹

AMPHIMETRIC DISPUTES

'*Amphimetoires*' are groups of siblings born of the same father but different mothers.²² Such groups could never be at peace with each other in the Greek world (whereas full siblings almost always co-operate), and the different mothers and their respective sons' interests were closely identified as they struggled for precedence and attempted to bastardize competing lines. 'I will never approve of men who keep two beds, nor amphimetric children [*amphimatorias korous*], strifes and grievous pains for houses [*loikon*]' (Euripides, *Andromache* 465–7).

This strife is particularly clear where legitimacy is more fluid, as in the semi-mythological royal world of Euripidean tragedy, and in the world of Macedonian and Hellenistic monarchy, but it can be traced even in cases of classical Athenian civil law.

In *Medea* (of 431) Euripides plots Medea's revenge on Jason for abandoning her, his *xene* wife, for Glauke, heiress-princess of Corinth.²³ She closely identifies her children's fate with her own: the house (*oikos/domos*) no longer exists;²⁴ her abandonment would have been forgivable had she been childless, but not now that children have been born—to sow two lines of children is an outrage.²⁵ Jason's defence of his indefensible behaviour is intentionally unconvincing.²⁶ He argues that he wished to rear children worthy of his house (it is implied, unlike Medea's children), so that:

Having sown brothers for the children born of you I might bring them together, and that we might be happy once I had dovetailed together my family. For what need do you have of children? But it profits me to benefit my existing children

with those that will be born in the future...wishing to save you, and beget royal children from the same seed as my existing ones, as a bulwark to my house.

(Euripides, *Medea* 562–7, 595–7)²⁷

In practice different wives and their children must always be kept separately in different houses;²⁸ the idea of bringing two women together under one roof is in poor taste; worse, the principle that one set of half-siblings may help and support another is a contradiction of the principle of amphimetric strife so prevalent in Greek culture. The emotions underpinning this strife are well illustrated by Glauke's horror at the sight of Medea's children: 'she covered her eyes and turned away her white cheek, abominating [*musachtheisa*] the entrance of the children' (1148f.). Medea's ultimate murder of the children merely makes explicit the social 'murder' to which Jason has subjected them by abandoning her: to such an extent does she consider the children's fate and her own to be linked (1363ff.).

Andromache (of 425) refracts many of *Medea*'s themes. Andromache as slave-concubine to Neoptolemos has borne him a bastard son, Molossos.²⁹ His new, legitimate wife, Hermione, apparently sterile, is crazed with envy towards Andromache and Molossos, fearing that they will usurp her position in the house, and therefore she plots their death. Both women see their fate as dependent upon that of their progeny; Andromache says 'hope ever led me on that I would find some defence and succour against my misfortunes, if my child was safe' (27f.; cf. 198ff.); Hermione says '[sc. because I am childless] I shall be a slave to the bastard bed over which I formerly lorded it' (927f.) and 'I would have been bearing legitimate children and she bastard-born semi-slaves for my children' (941f.). Hermione repeatedly expresses her anxiety over her childlessness.³⁰

Closely parallel to Hermione's concerns here are those of Creusa in the *Ion* (before 412?), who again believes herself to be childless, and fears that she will be usurped in her husband Xouthos' household, and of the throne of Athens to which she is heiress, by her husband's bastard son Ion, born of an unidentified woman;³¹ murder (attempted) is again the answer. The establishment of Ion in Xouthos' house is seen as the *ipso facto* usurpation of Creusa.³²

The eponymous hero of the *Hippolytus* (of 428) is Euripides' most celebrated bastard.³³ Theseus' grown son by an Amazon queen, he is dragged into dispute with Phaidra, Theseus' legitimate Greek wife, who has young sons of her own: it is fretting for the legitimacy-status of her own children that impels Phaidra to act against Hippolytus, for she fears that the children's paternity will be in doubt if her adulterous lust for him is revealed. By her suicide and concomitant attempt to destroy Hippolytus, she hopes to secure the future status of her own children: 'May they inhabit the city of glorious Athens, thriving in the right of free speech, being of good repute on account of their mother' (421ff.).

In these plays we see the mothers of different lines and the children of these lines considering their fates to be closely associated, as they struggle for succession, whether 'bastard' or 'legitimate'.

There were real-life examples of this kind of dispute in the Macedonian and Hellenistic kingdoms. A famous example of this kind of strife occurred between the different lines of Philip II of Macedon. After many (polygamous) marriages, including one to the Epirote princess Olympias, by whom he had the now grown son Alexander, who

expected to succeed him, he married, around 337, the Macedonian noblewoman, Cleopatra, niece of Attalos:

And when [Philip] brought [Cleopatra] into his household beside Olympias, he threw his whole life into confusion. For immediately during the actual wedding celebrations, Attalos said 'Now surely there will be born for us legitimate kings and not bastards.' Now Alexander, when he heard this, threw the cup, which he was holding in his hands, at Attalos; thereupon he too threw his goblet at Alexander. After this Olympias fled to the Molossians and Alexander to the Illyrians. And Cleopatra bore Philip the daughter named Europa.

(Athenaeus 13.557b–e (=Satyrus F21 Kumaniecki))³⁴

Attalos' definition of Alexander as a bastard was clearly a persuasive one in a context where the concept of legitimacy was fluid and succession competitive. Attalos' argument was doubtless of a 'Periclean' nature: only Cleopatra could bear Philip legitimate offspring, because she was his only Macedonian wife. Doubtless Alexander's counter-claim was that his mother was the most royal of Philip's wives. Olympias and Alexander are associated in their common exile.³⁵

The court of the Successor Lysimachus, king of Macedon and Thrace, fell to similar amphimetric strife: having, by Nicea, a fine grown son Agathokles, groomed to succeed, he married around 300 a daughter of Ptolemy, Arsinoe II, and had sons by her also. Arsinoe rightly began to fear for her future and that of her children after the imminent death of her aged king, so she persuaded him, in his dotage, to kill Agathokles (in 284–2). The court and kingdom subsequently fell apart in disgust. It was said also that Arsinoe had been scorned in love by her stepson. Perhaps she had tried to become his wife: this would have been a way of resolving the conflict between Lysimachus' different lines (such a solution was adopted by Seleucus I of Syria, who handed over his younger bride Stratonike to his heir apparent Antiochus I).³⁶

In fact Lysimachus' court was undermined by two amphimetric disputes, for the antagonism between the lines of Nicea and Arsinoe was intensified by the fact that Arsinoe's own amphimetric half-sister, Lysandra, was bride to Nicea's son Agathokles.³⁷ For Lysandra was Ptolemy's daughter by Eurydike, and full sister of Ptolemy Keraunos, whereas Arsinoe was daughter of Berenike (who had usurped Eurydike's position in Ptolemy's house), and full sister of Ptolemy Philadelphus (whom she later went on to marry). A bitter struggle between these amphimetric half-brothers at home had ended in the exile of an embittered Keraunos.³⁸ Now Memnon curiously tells that Arsinoe was abetted in her destruction of Agathokles by her exiled amphimetric half-brother, Keraunos: this is unexpected co-operation between amphimetric half-siblings, particularly as in addition Keraunos would have been striking against the interests of his own full sister, Lysandra, Agathokles' wife.³⁹ It is better by far to assume that Memnon has confused Ptolemy Keraunos with Arsinoe's own eldest son by Lysimachus, also named Ptolemy (subsequently 'of Telmessos'), the very boy who stood to gain everything from Agathokles' demise.⁴⁰ Keraunos exhibited the more anticipated sort of conduct towards Arsinoe when he subsequently murdered her children by Lysimachus.⁴¹

These examples of amphimetric disputes from the Hellenistic world could be

multiplied many times over (consider, for example, the dispute between Perseus and Demetrios, amphimetric sons of Philip V of Macedon,⁴² and the dispute between Laodike and Berenike, rival wives of Antiochus II of Syria).⁴³

One would have expected fewer disputes of this kind in the relatively regulated and static context of civic bastardy law, but there are some apposite cases from classical Athens, at the borders of legality. Demosthenes 39 and 40 (of 348 and 347 or 345) describe the bitter rivalry between Mantitheos and 'Boiotos' (who also claims the name 'Mantitheos'), amphimetric sons of Mantias. Mantitheos' belief that Boiotos was wrongly recognized by Mantias, and that he is therefore *nothos*, is clearly the source of all the brothers' disputes, even if Mantitheos does not make the charge of bastardy or *xenia* explicit:⁴⁴ Mantitheos implies that Boiotos' mother, Plangon (her name is supplied in disrespect)⁴⁵ was really a concubine.⁴⁶ The two particular issues addressed by the extant speeches (the right to the name 'Mantitheos', and the ownership of Mantitheos' mother's marriage-portion) seem to have been among the smaller disputes between them, over at least seven years. In the first speech Mantitheos makes several allegations against Boiotos: he had made him receive his own summons for desertion; he had entered suits against him for money; he argues that Mantitheos induced Mantias to treat him (Boiotos) with despise; he failed to appear to answer the charges he, Mantitheos, had brought against him. In the second speech Mantitheos makes further allegations: Boiotos had accused him of murderous assault before the Areopagus and tried to get him exiled; he had claimed that, when he failed his scrutiny (*dokimasia*) for *taxiarch*, the judgement applied to Mantitheos; Boiotos' lecherous friends have threatened to rape his daughter and poison Mantitheos himself.⁴⁷

These quarrels are firmly pegged onto Mantias' attitudes towards the two women: Mantitheos says that Boiotos argues that he (Boiotos) was first acknowledged but then disowned by his father as a result of a quarrel with Plangon, Boiotos' mother (40.29), that Mantias dishonoured Plangon as a favour to Mantitheos' mother (40.26), and that Mantias wronged him in many ways in order to show favour to Mantitheos (40.45).

A further example of civic amphimetric strife can be seen in the disputes between the two wives that Socrates held concurrently under the concession of *c.* 410, which allowed Athenians to marry two wives to compensate for the oliganthropy caused by the Peloponnesian War (Xanthippe, mother of Lamprokles, and Myrto, mother of Sophroniskos and Menexenos): 'These women joined battle with each other, and only stopped to attack Socrates for not stopping them from fighting.'⁴⁸

So we see that there are many instances in Greek culture of a fluid kind of legitimacy dispute where the status and lot of different mothers and their respective children are closely allied.

FROM THE STATUS OF BASTARDS TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Turning wholly now to Greek civil society, we can perhaps correlate the status of women generally in any given society to that of bastards. Let us begin with some general considerations. Malinowski formulated his 'Principle of Legitimacy' (of supposedly universal application) thus:

Among the conditions that define conception as a socially legitimate fact there is one of fundamental importance. The most important moral and legal rule concerning the physiological side of kinship is that no child should be brought into the world without a man—and one man at that—assuming the role of sociological father, that is, guardian and protector, the male link between the child and the rest of the community.

(Malinowski 1930:137)⁴⁹

This important principle is still considered universally valid by many students of bastardy.⁵⁰ It does at any rate seem contingently likely that if a society conceptualizes itself primarily as a network of males (as most have), admittance to the network will depend upon a claim upon one of the males already in it. Bastards' entitlement to belong to society will then usually be problematic, because their claim on a man—a social father—is problematic. Yet all children, bastard or legitimate, have, at the point of birth, a rather more easily identifiable claim on a woman—the mother that plainly carried them for nine months and gave them birth. Adding to Malinowski's theory, we may hypothesize that bastards in general, that is, as a class, should have as much claim to belong to society as do their mothers and other women in general (as a class), and also that, in any given society, there should be a contingent link between the status (economic and other) of women, relative to that of men, and that of bastards, relative to that of legitimates. We may also hypothesize that the greater the gulf between the statuses of men and women, the more strictly the definition of bastardy will be drawn, and the greater the anxiety that will be displayed about it. We may see bastardy as a function of the disparity in status between men and women. If so, then the history of bastardy and the history of women may be exploited to serve each other, the degree to which the status of bastardy is differentiated from that of legitimacy, and the degree to which bastards themselves are disadvantaged, providing a crude index to the general status of women. It is surprising how seldom this connection has been made. A notable exception is Jenny Teichman's conclusion to her discussion of the bastard in (primarily) English law:

Why was the bastard *no-one's child* [i.e. *filius nullius*, a former English legal principle]?...The reason is that a bastard's mother, being a woman, was in fact that very *no-one*. In law, in lineage, and in matters having to do with property, a woman, until modern times, was a kind of nullity...Improvements in status...of illegitimate children...occurred concurrently with radical changes in the status of women.

(Teichman 1978:83)

The 'status of women [in general]', however, is a hard thing to pin down: evidently, different women have different statuses in the same society (e.g. slavewomen, free women, queens); the same woman can have different statuses in different contexts in the same society (e.g. law versus religion); different individuals in a society (men or women) have different attitudes to women, both to women as a whole, and as individuals; and social practices in general can have a very indirect relationship with their corresponding ideologies. Despite this, most social historians do still consider the general assessment of the statuses of variously defined subgroups

an important exercise, however abstract their conclusions must be. A second problem is that of ‘convertibility’. Women are assigned different roles, duties and privileges from men: we must avoid the common and ultimately circular fallacy of simply equating difference with inferiority (e.g. ‘Women wove, so weaving was valued lowly’; ‘Women were valued lowly because they wove’). How then does one compare the status of women with that of men, when it is not simply quantitatively different, but qualitatively different also? How do we ‘convert’ between the two? A solution may lie in bastardy.

If I am right that the bastard is the ‘woman’s child’, and my hypothesis of a correlation between the status of women and the status and differentiatedness of bastards is accepted, then the status of a male bastard may be seen as equivalent to that of a male legitimate child, after it has been filtered through that of a woman—we can therefore, through the bastard, make a quantitative comparison of the statuses of men and women.⁵¹

We will test these hypotheses on three ancient Greek societies: classical Athens, classical Sparta, and the *khora* of Hellenistic Egypt.

Classical Athens

After 451 Athens enjoyed a bastardy regime in which the widest number of classes of children were bastardized of all the bastardy regimes we know of in the Greek world.⁵² The state was also the harshest in the debarring of its defined bastards from the privileges of the legitimate, and the most rigorous in policing the distinction between bastard and legitimate.⁵³ In a complex passage of the *Politics* Aristotle describes, stage by stage, the classes of children that a Greek democracy can exclude from citizenship, and therefore ‘bastardize’, as its citizenship qualifications become tighter (I paraphrase interpretatively):

When a state has too many legitimate citizens, it makes exclusions of groups from citizenship, stage by stage. First they exclude those born of a slave man and a citizen woman, or a slave woman and a citizen man, then they exclude those born of a citizen woman and a free but non-citizen man, and finally they exclude those born of a citizen man and free but non-citizen woman, so that only those born of citizens on both sides are citizens.

(Aristotle, *Politics* 1278a32–4)⁵⁴

The citizenship qualifications of Periclean Athens correspond to the tightest of which Aristotle can conceive.

The legitimacy distinction at Athens was governed by criteria of process and group. A ‘law of Solon’ quoted by Demosthenes remained the basis of the definition of bastardy by process throughout the classical period: ‘Whichever woman is betrothed in just terms to be a wife (*damar*) by her father or her brother born of the same father or her paternal grandfather, from this woman the children are to be legitimate (*gnesious*)’ (Demosthenes 46.18). The act of betrothal itself (*engue*) seems to have been fairly strictly defined, comprising a witnessed speech-act of the order: ‘I betroth this woman for the ploughing of legitimate children.’⁵⁵ Betrothal and legitimacy were, then, reciprocally defined.

As to the marriageable group, in 451 Pericles had made a law on bastards that only children born of two citizen parents (*astoi*) could themselves be citizens.⁵⁶ (The motivations for the law are disputed—I favour Athenian pride in autochthony—but need not concern us here.) It was subsequently the bastard born of the non-citizen mother that came to dominate the conception of bastardy at Athens: thus Pollux comes to identify all *nothoi* with '*metroxenoi*'.⁵⁷ Even if after 451 marriage with a foreign woman remained possible, it would have been meaningless, and by the time of Apollodoros' speech against Neaira (Demosthenes 59), of 347–348, it was illegal to *sunoikein* with an alien woman -literally 'live with', but the way the term is used in the speech requires that it bear the more specific sense of 'live with as if married to'.

Bastards' disabilities were severe: we have said that from 451 the (probably new) class of bastards *born of alien mothers* was debarred from citizenship, with all the disabilities that that entailed. Metic status was all such a *nothos* could hope for—no participation in political life, no marriage with citizens, no right to own land (*enktesis*), but the duties to pay an additional tax, the *metoikion* (and if rich to make liturgies) and to serve in the army. All this and one could be killed with virtual impunity.⁵⁸ It remains a bone of contention whether bastards who were the extramarital children of two Athenian citizens were entitled to citizenship; indeed this question absorbs the major part of all writing on Greek bastardy, with most scholars concluding that they were not (in this I concur).⁵⁹ But there can in any case have been very few children born to an unmarried Athenian citizen woman that an Athenian man was prepared to acknowledge as his, and very few of these in turn will have been allowed to live. Only children born to Athenian citizen concubines (*pallakai*) in fact matter here, and actual Athenian citizen *pallakai* are virtually non-existent in our evidence and indeed may not actually have existed.⁶⁰ (However, although this question deals with a group of people whose existence might only be hypothetical, it is conceptually important, because the answer to it determines whether classical Athenian citizenship was ultimately defined by marriage or descent.)

Whether *nothoi* of two Athenian parents were citizens or not, all *nothoi* alike could inherit little from their father. A law from the Solonian period (or possibly just post-Solonian) at Aristophanes' *Birds* 1660ff. debar *nothoi* from the *ankhisteia* or group of relatives eligible to inherit. Bastards were limited to a nominal *notheia*, or 'bastard's share' of 500 or 1,000 drachmas, again by a 'law of Solon'.⁶¹

It is clear that the Athenians were immensely anxious about bastardy: the phratry admission-oath, upon which citizenship effectively depended, required legitimacy be sworn to, and at the end of the fifth century the Demotionid/Dekeleian phratry decree policed and repeatedly scrutinized the legitimacy of its members in complex procedures.⁶² In the course of the fourth century the genre of comedy came to focus primarily upon bastardy anxiety: one of New Comedy's standard plots is that in which a young man falls in love with a woman who is unmarriageable either because foreign or slave, but is prevented from forming or pursuing a liaison with her either by his father or her pimp; in the end the girl is discovered to be free and a citizen, and love is transformed from a force that threatens legitimacy to a force that affirms it (e.g. Menander *Samia*, Plautus *Rudens*, *Casina*, Terence *Andria*). In another standard plot a citizen girl is

feared unmarriageable for having had a bastard (which she has curiously neglected to expose), but all turns out well when it is discovered that her suitor is, unbeknown to himself, the father of the child (e.g. Menander *Samia* again, Plautus *Aulularia* and cf. Menander *Epitrepontes*); thus a child thought to be a bastard is recovered for the state, and the love that threatened the *polis* ultimately strengthens it.⁶³

Anxiety focused also on the possibility of adulterine bastardy, the possibility that one's wife might bear another man's child: a husband could kill with impunity an adulterer caught in the act, and after an adultery was detected, the husband was constrained by law to divorce his wife, on pain of losing civil rights.⁶⁴

Concomitantly with classical Athens' narrowest definition of the legitimate group and extreme anxiety about bastardy, we find the gulf in status between men and women to have been great: beyond the basic exclusion from public and political life, common to all Greek women, they were perpetual minors at law, ever under a male guardian (*kurios*);⁶⁵ they had virtually no control or influence in matters financial or economic;⁶⁶ they were generally regarded as irrational, and if clever, evil;⁶⁷ their physical sphere of movement was, ideally, severely limited, with life based upon confinement to the *gynaikonitis*.⁶⁸

Sparta

By contrast, citizen women in Sparta can be said to have had the highest relative status accorded to women anywhere in the Greek world (indeed it was thought that Lycurgus had not imposed any laws on them),⁶⁹ and concomitantly the institution of bastardy at Sparta seems to have been a minimal one.⁷⁰ It seems to have been effectively almost impossible for a Spartan citizen woman to have given birth to a bastard; such bastards as there were, '*mothakes*', were the sons of Spartiate men by helot women, and it seems that these children (whose nearest equivalent at Athens would have been not bastard but slave) could gain citizenship by a regular process.

The word '*nothos*' only appears once in all our evidence relating to common bastardy at Sparta:⁷¹ Xenophon (*Hellenica* 5.39) tells that in 380 Agesipolis led a force of thirty Spartiates, and was also accompanied by a large number of fine volunteers from the *perioikoi*, *xenoi* from the so-called *trophimoi* ('reared boys') and bastard sons of the Spartiates (*nothoi ton Spartiaton*), very good-looking and not inexperienced in *ta kala* (i.e. education in *agoge* and membership of a *syssition*).

For reasons we will see, these *nothoi* of Xenophon's can only be the children of Spartiate men born of helot mothers; they are most easily identified with (at least a subsection of) that class at Sparta later called *mothakes*, a shadowy group known about only through some contradictory fragments. Aelian says, in a chapter devoted to famous *nothoi*:

Kallikratidas and Gylippos and Lysander were called *mothakes* in Sparta. This was a name for those reared alongside⁷² the rich boys, and the rich boys' fathers used to dispatch the *mothakes* with their sons to compete alongside them in the gymnasia. The man who made this concession, Lycurgus, gave a share of the Spartan polity to those that remained in *agoge*.

(Aelian, *VH* 12.43)

Phylarchus says:

The *mothakes* are foster-brothers [*syntrophoi*] of the Lacedaemonians. The boys of citizen status each...make some boys their foster-brothers—some one, others two, and some more. The *mothakes* are free, though not Lacedaemonians. But they all share in the education. They say that one of these was Lysander, who defeated the Athenian navy, after he had been made a citizen for his courage.

(Phylarchus *FGH* 81 F43)⁷³

Other sources stress the freedom of the *mothakes*, whilst Hesychius calls them slaves. The significance of this emphasis is presumably that they were produced in a context where one might have expected them to be slaves—i.e. surely, from helot mothers. We should note that Xenophon's *notboi* are associated with *trophimoi*, fosterlings, and to be 'fostered' (*syntrephesthai*) is the primary characteristic of the *mothax*.⁷⁴

Despite Phylarchus' assertion that the *mothakes* were non-Spartiate, they clearly could gain citizenship, as the cases of Lysander and the others show—apparently by a formalized procedure. A fragment of Teles perhaps says as much: 'The Spartiates honour the man who has taken up *agoge*, and remains in it, be he foreign or born of a helot woman [*lex heilotos*, and surely, by implication, a Spartiate father], equally with the best men.'

So let us consider how it was virtually impossible for a Spartiate woman to have a bastard. First, legitimacy does not seem to have depended upon process, that is, on any legal form of marriage: although the Spartans had some distinctive marriage customs, including (ritual?) rape of the bride, there is no reason to think any of them legally required to constitute marriage. In particular there seems to have been no rigorous form of betrothal, as at Athens.⁷⁵

The marriageable group seems to have been much more open than the Athenian one, despite traditional Spartan distrust of foreigners. Although Plutarch knew an 'ancient' (*palaion*) Spartan law that forbade a 'Heraclid' (probably in any case equivalent in this context just to members of the royal families) to beget children from a foreign woman, context shows that the law was long in disuse in the classical period (*Agis* 11.2). Nicolaus of Damascus tells that the Spartans urged their women to conceive children by men of exceptionally fine appearance, whether *astos* or *xenos*: wife-lending certainly did occur at Sparta (see p. 230), and if the women could be lent to *xenoi*, they could presumably be married to them too.⁷⁶

The Spartans not only permitted but encouraged astonishing freedoms within marriage. This was in service of the ethics of *teknopotia* ('childmaking'), which demanded that as much as possible of the Spartan warrior's *gennaion sperma* ('noble-generative seed') be brought to fruit in fertile Spartan wombs (Spartiates were often anxious about their declining numbers):⁷⁷ those who produced more than three sons were exempted from military service;⁷⁸ Spartan mothers were idealized;⁷⁹ unmarried men suffered disabilities and humiliations, and were treated like *tresantes* ('cowards');⁸⁰ alongside the crime of *agamion*, non-marriage, was a crime of *opsigamion*, marrying when too old to be useful and thereby hogging a fertile woman, and *kakogamion*, which presumably covered other forms of marital behaviour from which children were unlikely to result (e.g. abstinence).⁸¹

Hence, polygyny was illegal,⁸² but polyandry of various forms encouraged. Polybius tells that three or four men could have one wife between them, more if they were brothers, and that it was customary for a man to pass on a fertile wife to a friend once he had begotten children.⁸³ Xenophon and Plutarch say that older men would invite young men whose body and soul they admired to father children on their wife (in mitigation of *opsigamion?*);⁸⁴ they also say that if a man wished to have children, but not to marry, he could have them by another man's wife, with his consent.⁸⁵ This was the culture that gave rise to the remark attributed to Lycurgus that one should breed one's people in the manner one breeds dogs or horses.⁸⁶

Questions about succession in such a system immediately arise: the problem is obviated if we accept, as many scholars do, basing themselves on Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 16, that in the fifth century *kleroi*, plots of land, were allocated from a centralized source. Such a system would explain how the Spartiates showed little anxiety about what we call bastardy: children fathered by other men on their wives would not threaten the succession of their blood sons. Things must have changed in the fourth century after the rhetra of Epitadeus (made in the late fifth century, if historical), which seems to have introduced free succession. But since succession was thereafter free, *nothoi* could not *ipso facto* have been legally excluded from inheritance, though their sociological father may not have had much incentive to include them.⁸⁷

A wife was not kept after marriage in a fashion that evinced undue concern for the surveillance of legitimacy. Her husband lived away in the mess (if under thirty), and visited her circumspectly, the bride being encouraged to set up trysts with him. Lycurgus was held to have scoffed at other Greeks, who, unlike the Spartans, locked up their wives and guarded them, claiming the exclusive right to produce children from them.⁸⁸ The contrast with Athenian seclusion could not be stronger.

Unsurprisingly, the Athenians accused the Spartan women of licence (*anesis*).⁸⁹ Did the Spartans actually have any concept of adultery? Plutarch denies that they did—at least in the old days (he tells that the ancient Spartan Geradas denied the possibility of adultery at Sparta, and in consequence would only set as its penalty the unpayable fine of a gigantic bull); however, he thinks *moikheia* did develop because the Spartans' altruistic eugenic practices degenerated into sexual laxity;⁹⁰ but this is a moralist's, not a legislator's, distinction. Slight regard for adultery is evinced in the Spartans' greeting to Akrotatos, in the context of his affair with Kleonymos' wife, Khilonis, 'Go, Akrotatos and screw Khilonis: just make sure you make good children for Sparta.'⁹¹ Cartledge thinks sex between a Spartan woman and a *xenos* constituted adultery,⁹² but since Spartan wives could be offered to *xenoi*, sex between a Spartan woman and a *xenos* could not *regularly* have been considered adulterous. The only serious possibility for *moikheia* is rather sex between a Spartiate woman and a non-Spartiate member of the Spartan state—a helot, or possibly a *perioikos*.⁹³ This seems the only significant category of bastards that Spartan women could bear, and in practice they were doubtless very few (we know of no non-royal bastards).

So, let us summarize the situation of *nothoi* in Sparta: the circumstances in which Spartiate women could give birth to bastards are very hard to pin down, and were probably to all intents and purposes non-existent. Spartan men were able to get *nothoi*, or *mothakes* as they were known, on helot women, and these were brought up in *agoge* alongside Spartiate boys, and could gain citizenship through a formal

procedure.⁹⁴ Except in the special case of the kingship, there is no evidence for anxiety over bastardy at Sparta.

We should therefore expect to find in Sparta a relatively high status for women, and this we do indeed find. They had great economic power both before and after Epitadeus. Aristotle said the Spartans were *gynaikokratoumenoi*, ‘ruled by their women’, and that ‘nearly two-fifths of the whole country belongs to women, because there are many heiresses, and because of large dowries’ (*Pol.* 1269a29–1271b19); by the mid-third century, and the accession of Agis IV, a majority of Spartan land was in female possession, and Agis’ mother and grandmother were pre-eminent (Plutarch *Agis* 7.4). It is hard to find any formal kind of *kurieia* at Sparta; women’s ability to dispose of their own property is attested by Agis’ request to rich women to give up their wealth;⁹⁵ heiresses were conceptualized differently from Athenian *epikleroi*, ‘women who come along with the plot’, *patroukhos* or *patroiokhos* meaning ‘possessor of the patrimony’.⁹⁶

We have seen that there was remarkably little physical control and surveillance of women; indeed it was argued that men were rather more regimented than women after their initially parallel education.⁹⁷ Alongside the tradition of the licence of Spartan women ran a positive one of them as staunch breeders and encouragers of warriors: ‘Come back with your shield or on it.’⁹⁸

The Hellenistic Egyptian *Khora*

The word *nothos* does not appear in our evidence for Greek family life in the Hellenistic Egyptian *khora*—nor does any word that might be a synonym: this, as we shall see, is significant. (The status-designation *apator* (‘fatherless’) is strictly a Roman phenomenon, corresponding to Latin *spurius*, and denoting in particular Roman military bastards.)⁹⁹

The evidence for marital systems in the Hellenistic Egyptian *khora* consists largely of preserved papyrus marriage contracts: it is therefore the evidence of practice rather than interdiction. We also face a methodological difficulty here in that the evidence for bastardy and the status of women is here more intertwined than at Athens or Sparta. The reconstruction of the order and sense of the approximately 100 marriage contracts that survive is a complex business, which cannot be gone into here (I base my account of them, fairly uncontroversially, on the work of Wolff and Vatin).¹⁰⁰

Life for the Greek settlers in the *khora* was very different from that in the *polis*: they were in no sense *politai*, citizens, merely inhabitants of a land over which Ptolemy ruled. Bastardy and citizenship could never be harnessed together therefore in one equation, as in classical Athens. No Ptolemaic decrees on bastardy are known. Indeed it is clear that there was no marriage law in itself as distinct from contract law: one designed one’s own marriage with the father of the bride, or later the bride herself, as one desired. There were basically two popular judicial systems in the *khora*: first there were the *laokritai*, whose purpose was primarily to serve the Egyptian community, but under whose jurisdiction came any contract written in Egyptian, whatever the ethnicity of the makers of the contract; second, the Greek community was served by *dikasteria*, under whose jurisdiction came any contract

written in Greek, again whatever the ethnicity of the makers of the contract.¹⁰¹ Although we shall be concerned exclusively with the latter group of contracts, the Egyptians could also employ a form of marriage based purely upon cohabitation without any contract. It was always logically possible therefore that a simple act of cohabitation without contract between ethnic Greeks could be considered legal marriage, if there were no complicating circumstances.

It will be immediately clear that there was no legally limited marriage group in the *khora*. From our very first marriage contract, P.Eleph. 1, Greeks of different ethnics intermarry—Temnian and Coan. A child took on his or her father's ethnic, so that these became rather meaningless after the first generation. Equally, marriage with ethnic Egyptians was perfectly legal and possible, and, as one might expect, appears to become progressively more common throughout the period. (It is difficult to assess the extent of this sort of union because in any case many Egyptians became Hellenized and Greeks Egyptianized; furthermore, Pomeroy has noted the tendency for women to become assimilated to the ethnically Egyptian, men toward the ethnically Greek.)¹⁰²

Let us turn to the contracts themselves. The earliest, P.Eleph. 1, exhibits certain peculiarities best discussed separately below. The other contracts fall into two basic sorts, though these two groups come to resemble each other closely: the *syngraphe synoikisiou*, 'contract of living together' (e.g. P.Gen. 21), and the *syngraphe homologias* (e.g. P.Tebt. III 815). The *homologias* is basically a financial document comprising stipulations about the dowry made prior to the marriage itself; the *synoikisiou*, made theoretically after the marriage, attests that the union was made according to the solemn old Greek form of *ekdosis*. Over time use of the *synoikisiou* declined, with the making of the *homologias* itself typically being postponed until after the actual commencement of the union, and with stipulations about marital behaviour being transferred back from the *synoikisiou* into the *homologias*. Thus P.Tebt. III 815, a *homologias* of 282–281 BC, is merely a pre-marital dowry-agreement, whilst P.Tebt. 104, a *homologias* of 92 BC, is now sufficient for attesting the marriage, and is itself made after the cohabitation has begun; *synoikisiou* contracts are rare after this point. P.Par. 13, a *homologias* of intermediate date, c. 157 BC, exhibits an intermediate phase, in which marriage begins with the *homologias*, but the groom undertakes to draw up a *synoikisiou* within a year. Likewise P.Freiburg 26, 29 and 30 of 179/8 BC stipulate that the *synoikisiou* will be drawn up within thirty days of the 'wife's' request for it. Marriage law, and with it bastardy law, is therefore in flux. The eventually prevalent custom, by which a simple cohabitation union, without *ekdosis*, can merely have a contract drawn up for it after the fact, is indicative of a society not unduly concerned about bastardy. The decline of the *synoikisiou* is the decline of *ekdosis*, a thing also demonstrated by the rise of so-called 'auto-*ekdosis*' by women, i.e. women giving themselves in marriage (as in P.Geiss. I 2, of 173 BC), which is really a negation of true *ekdosis* and of *kurieia*.¹⁰³

No law ever compelled *ekdosis* in the *khora* (its non-compulsory status is attested also by its piecemeal disintegration): it was merely a custom that the Greeks brought from their backgrounds in the *polis*. No doubt it was at first socially compelling, and could effectively bastardize those born of non-*ekdosis* unions in the early period. If this is so, it can be seen already that a rise in the status—here the competences in particular—of women correlates with the decline in the differentiation of bastardy.

Let us return to P.Eleph. 1 of 311 BC: the contract calls itself a *syngraphe synoikisias*, which shows it to be an ancestor of the subsequent *synoikisiou* contracts. We find two words of significance in this contract which do not appear in later ones. First, the explicit affirmation by the groom Heraklides that he has received the bride from her *kurios*—hence again the strong early influence of *polis* custom, which will evaporate almost at once. Second, Heraklides stipulates that he regards his bride Demetria as his *gynaika gnesian*, his ‘legitimate wife’. Vatin perversely reads this as meaning that Heraklides accepts her as being the legitimate offspring of her parents—a thing that can have been of hardly any significance to Heraklides in this enchoric context (unless he hoped to inherit through her as some sort of heiress).¹⁰⁴ Clearly the phrase means that Heraklides will consider Demetria the progenitrix of *gnesioi paides*, legitimate children (remember that at Athens *engue* is for the explicit purpose of ‘ploughing legitimate children’). There is no state to give meaning to the word, or surveillance to the institution of *gnesiotes*, legitimacy, but Heraklides must act as if there were, *gnesiotes* being conceived in terms of a norm derived from old *polis* customs. Fully concomitant with this is Heraklides’ undertaking among his marital obligations: ‘let it not be allowed for Heraklides to bring in in addition another woman to the dishonour of Demetria, nor to make children by another woman.’ In situations where the state can give surveillance to *gnesiotes*, such undertakings against bringing in additional women and having children by them are unnecessary, of course: it is because of the very fact that there is no guarantee of legitimacy for Demetria’s children, and the fact that the very concept is evanescent, that Heraklides has to bind himself to eschew other women.

The word *gnesian*, and the stipulation against begetting children elsewhere, shows us that Leptines considers his daughter’s status to be dependent upon her childbearing capacity: it is only by ensuring that she alone can be the mother of Heraklides’ children, and therefore that Heraklides will privilege the offspring of no other woman over hers, that her status can be guaranteed.

Now here we should contrast later contracts, such as P.Tebt. I 104 (of 91 BC), and P.Geiss. I 2 (of 173 BC), on which Vatin has written well. The word *gnesian*, not surprisingly, is gone, but the husband’s duties towards his wife remain similar, with a small but telling modification:

Let it not be possible for him to bring in another woman/wife on top of Olympias, nor to keep a concubine, *nor a catamite*, nor make children by a woman other than Olympias, nor keep another home over which Olympias will not be mistress.

(P.Geiss. I 2)

Olympias’ poor husband is debarred from four different modes of associating with women in which he might produce offspring to threaten the status of Olympias’ children, but he is also debarred from keeping a catamite: in other words, for Olympias is demanded not a fidelity of legitimacy, but a sexual fidelity. Greek monogamy is no longer conceived solely or primarily in terms of guaranteeing the status of offspring, but in terms of respect, sexual and other (other stipulations of respect are also made in the contracts) for one’s wife. With the state no longer interested in descent line, legitimacy loses its significance, and if a basically monogamous family structure is to

be maintained, it is children that must now derive their position of respect from their mother, and not vice versa.¹⁰⁵

In the *khora*, then, we can trace the disintegration of customs that understandably mimic family life as known in the *polis*, and the decline of any hard-and-fast concept of bastardy. At the same time we see a rise in the respect for the wife herself. Furthermore, Greek women in Egypt seem to have had a fairly high economic standing. On marriage husbands often made *syngraphai trophitides*, ‘maintenance contracts’, by which they pledged a part of their property to the maintenance of the wife; the wife retained ownership of her dowry, though her husband had the use of it; the wife can get security on the husband’s property; marriage contracts often stipulated that a husband may not dispose of property without his wife’s consent. The availability of Egyptian law improved a woman’s financial competence, in that right from the start she could act under it without *kurios*. In fact Pomeroy believes the expeditiousness of Egyptian law for women was one of the reasons that Greek women in the *khora* became increasingly Egyptianized.¹⁰⁶

These three studies, then, tend to suggest that there may indeed be some correlation between the significance and differentiatedness of bastardy and the status of women in Greek society, and give us some further reason to view Greek bastards as ‘the children of women’.

NOTES

- 1 Cf. 47, 49, 62. Patterson believes the term ‘*nothos*’ to define only the children of women of recognized concubinal status, and not the ‘fatherless’ children simply of an unmarried mother, whom she thinks would rather be designated by such terms as *parthenios* and *skotios*; these latter she thinks would be ‘for better or worse dependent on [their] mother’ (50), which implies that she considers *nothoi* to be primarily dependent on their father. Although I concede that the vast majority of known *nothoi* are concubinal, I am less sure than Patterson about the limits of the word’s semantic field: e.g. the word surely does denote a ‘fatherless child’ in the context of the proverb *ek larnakos* (see p. 220).
- 2 See generally Glotz 1906:69–97; Delcourt 1944: esp. 37–43; Brulé 1987:135–8; Bremmer and Horsfall 1987:26–30.
- 3 Schol. Apollonius Rhodius 4.1091; Pherekydes *FGH* 3 F10; cf. Bremmer and Horsfall 1987:28.
- 4 Paus. 3.24.3.
- 5 Paus. 8.4.9; P.Mediol.1 (in Handley and Rea 1957:18); cf. Apollod. *Bibl.* 2.7.4, 3.9.1.
- 6 Paus. 10.19.2; cf. Glotz 1906:88; Sissa 1990:119–21.
- 7 *Hell* 3.3.1–4, with Plut. *Mor.* 399bc, *Ages.* 3, *Lys.* 22 and Paus. 3.8.9. It has been put to me that lameness might be a suitable metaphor for bastardy on the grounds that a lame man, with two legs, one good, one bad, might be symbolic of a bastard man, with two parents, one good, one bad. Such a reading might be supported by the application of this same oracle at Diodorus 11.50.4 to Sparta’s situation after the foundation of the Delian League, in which of her erstwhile two hegemonies, that by land and that by sea, she retained only the former. And similarly, Kimon argued that the Athenians should help Sparta in her hour of

need by exhorting them not to stand by and see Greece become lame, nor Athens be deprived of her yoke-partner (Plut. *Kim.* 16). However, bastards are attributed with a wide range of physical deformities, not lameness alone, nor is this lameness always confined to one leg. Although I do not altogether rule out the influence of the 'one-leg-one-parent' model in the use of lameness as a metaphor for bastardy, I think the association between the two ideas is more powerfully explained in the context of *ekthesis* and *pharmakeia*, as I shall explain in my forthcoming book, *The Crooked Kings of Ancient Greece*. If the model of a single good leg is to be significant in the context of the dispute between Agesilaos and Leotikhidas, then it best describes the condition of Sparta should Leotikhidas be confirmed as king, since she would only have one good (i.e. Heraklid) king instead of the usual two.

- 8 *Rep.* 7.535ff.; cf. Vernant 1982:22.
- 9 For the regular exposure of the deformed, cf. Plut. *Lyc.* 16; Plato *Rep.* 460c; Aristotle *Pol.* 1335b; Delcourt: 1938: *passim*, esp. 9–16; Vernant 1981:100f.; Bloch 1963:15–27; Den Boer: 1979: chs 6–7.
- 10 Et.Mag. s.v. *blaisos*; cf. Gernet 1968:293; Vernant 1982:26; Jameson 1986:3; Lambrinoudakis 1971:223–5. For the lambda as descriptive of leg rather than feet, cf. the unfortunate oikist of Kroton, the hunchback Myskel(l)os, i.e. *mu-skel(l)os*, 'mu(-twisted)-leg'; for the rich polysemy of this name cf. Masson 1989.
- 11 Pausanias 5.17.5 mistakenly thought a *kypsele* could be a chest (*larnax*): he was misled by the '*larnax* of Kypselos' he saw at Olympia (Roux 1963:279f.).
- 12 Delcourt 1944:16–22; Vernant 1982:36 n. 25.
- 13 Cf. Aristotle *Hist.An.* 618a31.
- 14 Roux 1963; cf. Delcourt 1944:19.
- 15 E.g. Hephaistos *kullopodion* (Homer *Il.* 18.371) and *elissomenon* (*Il.* 18.372); cf. Detienne and Vernant 1978:259–75; Vernant 1982:21, 37 n. 37.
- 16 A Homeric idiom describing the way the knees of slain warriors buckle in death on the battlefield (cf. *Il.* 11.578), here employed with great thematic aptness.
- 17 Cf. Hesiod *Theogony* 927–30, 'Hera begat glorious Hephaistos without sexual congress', and Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.5; in the Homeric epics Hephaistos is technically a son of Zeus (*Il.* 1.577ff., 14.338, *Od.* 8.312), but cf. Frazer 1921 on Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.3.5 and Delcourt 1957:39.
- 18 Cf. Parker 1987:191; Teichman 1978:83.
- 19 Cf. also *Il.* 15.18–20, 19.130; cf. Detienne and Vernant 1978: ch. 9; Lambrinoudakis 1971: ch. 1, esp. 29–41, 207–40.
- 20 *Aitia* F48 Pf.=Schol.*Il.* 1.1609ad Dindorf (not in Erbse).
- 21 Homeric Hymn *Apollo* 334ff. (Hera); Apollod. *Bibl.* 1.63 (Earth); cf. Delcourt 1957:148–9.
- 22 E.g. Eur. *And.* 465–7; Aristoph. *Frogs* 76; Hesychius s.v. (=Aeschylus *TGF* F73b). I am not convinced by the attempt of Sommerstein 1987 to redefine the word to mean 'with two mothers'.
- 23 Medea is ever the *xene/barbaros* in this play (e.g. 222, 591, 1336ff. etc.). Jason, *qua* Iolcian, is not in a strict sense an *astos* of Corinth, though he is only portrayed as an outsider in his own tendentious arguments, which cynically mimic Medea's (546ff.). The play is written primarily across the *Hellen/barbaros* rather than the *astos/xenos* axis, though there is some blurring of the distinction. The Athenian audience is certainly invited to see Medea's children as *metroxenoi* (Schol. Pind. *Ol.* 13.74 says Medea's children were honoured at Corinth after their death as *mixobarbaroi*).

- 24 L.139; cf. 77, 112, 694ff., 970; for Medea's dishonour cf. also 20, 33, 255.
- 25 Ll.489ff.
- 26 *Pace* Page 1938:xvi.
- 27 Cf. also 914ff.
- 28 E.g. Plautus *Cist.* (=Menander *Synaristosai*) 941f., 1004–5, 1016ff., 1041 (two wives and families kept in different cities); Dem. 39.26, 40.2, 8, 51 (two Athenian wives kept in separate houses); Plut. *Dem.* 32 (Demetrius rotates polygamously held wives into his court one at a time).
- 29 'Nothos': 636, 912, 927f., 941ff.
- 30 E.g. 340ff., 709ff.
- 31 Creusa's childlessness: 65, 304–6, 607–20, 657f., 680, 789, 817–18, 840, 864, 1302f.; cf. Loraux 1981:231.
- 32 Ll. 702ff, 808ff, 836–42, 880, 1295, cf. 1044.
- 33 'Nothos': 309, 962f, 1082f., 1453.
- 34 Cf. Plut. *Alex.* 9.4–5.
- 35 Cf. Giallombardo 1976–7; Tronson 1984; Greenwalt 1989; Unz 1985 for the context of polygamy and the openness and competitiveness of succession among the king's sons. These scholars all, to a greater or lesser extent, rightly challenge the oddly persistent misconceptions that Macedonian kings were monogamous, and that there was a rigidly defined succession-right in the kingdom.
- 36 Lysimachus, Agathokles and Arsinoe: Paus. 1.10.3–4; Plat. *Dem.* 31; Memnon *FGH* 434 F4.9; Justin 15.3.24; Trog. *Prol.* 24; cf. Saitta 1955:136–40; Geyer 1930:21. Seleucus, Antiochus and Stratonike: Plut. *Dem.* 31–3, 38; Appian *Syr.* 59–62; Lucian *De Syria Dea* 17–18; cf. Seibert 1967:48–9; Vatin 1970:89; Brodersen 1985.
- 37 Justin 16.1.19; Plut. *Dem.* 31; Paus. 1.9.6, 1.10.3, with Saitta 1955:87, 120–4; Seibert 1967:75f.
- 38 Appian *Syr.* 62; Memnon *FGH* 434 F8.2; Justin 17.2.9; Paus. 1.7.1; cf. Bouché-Leclercq 1903–7:I 96, 144; Vatin 1970:71–2; Seibert 1967:78f.
- 39 Memnon *FGH* 434 F4.9. This detail has unsettled many scholars, and some suspect the text to be corrupt: cf. Will 1979–82:I 103; Heinen 1972:7ff.; Saitta 1955:139–40.
- 40 Trog. *Prol.* 24; cf. Robert 1933.
- 41 Justin 23.2–3; Trog. *Prol.* 24–5; Memnon *FGH* 434 F8.7.
- 42 Cf. e.g. Edson 1935.
- 43 Cf. e.g. Bouché-Leclercq 1913–14:76–96.
- 44 For reconstruction of the events underlying these two speeches, see Rudhardt 1962; Humphreys 1989; Lotze 1981; Wolff 1944:76, 80–2, 84 (misleadingly attributing the *explicit* allegation of bastardy to Mantitheos).
- 45 Cf. Schaps 1977.
- 46 39.26, 40.8, 27.
- 47 39.17, 25, 27, 37, 40.32, 57.
- 48 Porphyry *FGH* 260 F11; for the concession, Diog. Laert. 2.26; cf. Plut. *Aristid.* 27; Athen. 556a; Aulus Gellius *NA* 15.20 (for Euripides' two wives).
- 49 Cf. 138, 140; 1927:213.
- 50 E.g. Teichman 1982:89f.; Laslett *et al.* 1980:5f.; Hartley 1975:3f.; Gill 1977:242–3f.
- 51 This provides a way of meeting the objection of Blok 1987:6 (and *passim*) that analyses of the 'position of women' do not relate their supposed 'position' to the 'position' of anything else. The status of women is here considered in terms of its relation to that of other social classes, and not as a disconnected entity. The

- scorn poured by Blok on attempts to assign a value to the 'position of women' is unfair: despite the immense difficulty of arriving at a satisfactory evaluation, nevertheless all attempts to liberate women past and present must have been or be founded upon attempts to define and differentiate between the actual and ideal statuses of women in contemporary and historical societies.
- 52 Note that the fact that a relatively large number of theoretical categories of children were bastardized does not in itself mean that there was in classical Athens a relatively large number of bastards (we have in fact no data allowing us to make any estimate whatsoever of their numbers). It would be fallacious to think that the larger the number of bastards, the greater the extent to which restrictions on them must have been relaxed.
- 53 For Athenian bastardy law in general see: Bickerman 1975; Davies 1978; Harrison 1968–71:61–8; Humphreys 1974; Just 1989:50–62; Lacey 1968:103–5; Latte 1937; Lotze 1981; MacDowell 1976; Patterson 1981, 1990; Rhodes 1978; Sealey 1984; Vernant 1980:45–70; Walters 1983; Wolff 1944. Most useful are, of recent works, Patterson 1990 and Just 1989 (I do not agree at all with Sealey 1984 or Walters 1983); of older work Wolff 1944 remains a monument, despite tortuous confusion on some issues.
- 54 This basically accords with MacDowell's translation, 1976:90. Despite the fact that the terms '(child of) slave man and citizen woman' and '(child of) slave woman and citizen man' are expressed as alternative stages rather than sequential ones in Aristotle's progress through increasingly narrower legitimacy regimes, this is, I think, only to be ascribed to the employment of stylistic variation in this awkwardly expressed passage: Aristotle does intend the terms to be read sequentially.
- 55 E.g. Menander *Dysk.* 842. Bickerman 1975:7–18, and, following him, Vernant 1980:47 and Sealey 1984:112f., 119f., 126f. insist that the *engue* was not strictly definable, and therefore that legitimacy was not strictly definable, but these ideas have not won general acceptance: cf. Just 1989:47–50; Patterson 1990:56, 1991.
- 56 Plut. *Per.* 37; [Ar.] *Ath. Pol.* 26.4.
- 57 3.21.
- 58 Cf. Whitehead 1977.
- 59 All items quoted at the beginning of this section discuss this question. See in particular Wolff 1944:76–82; Just 1989:55–60; Patterson 1990: *passim*. The main argument against the citizenship of bastards of two citizen parents is that all bastards alike were excluded from phratries, and although after Kleisthenes it was the demes, not the phratries, that formally bestowed citizenship on their members, in practice claims for citizenship in forensic oratory almost always base themselves upon admission to phratry, which implies that phratries remained the effective bestowers of citizenship in Athens. A further important consideration here, it seems to me, is that there are indications that all bastards alike before Pericles were deprived of citizenship. In the constitution of Draco at *Ath. Pol.* 4.2 (probably bogus *qua* constitution, but nonetheless preserving genuine archaic material) those who are to be eligible for the *strategia* must own land in the state and have legitimate offspring, and in the decree of Themistokles (ML 23, a fourth-century text, but again apparently preserving genuine provisions), those who are to be trierarchs must likewise meet the same qualifications (cf. also Dinarchus 1.70–1, of a law operative in 323). The purpose of these provisions can only be to ensure that those occupying high office have an interest in the future well-being of the state—i.e. in their children (cf. Thuc. 2.44.3). If the children must be legitimate,

this must be because illegitimate children had no part in the state, that is, were not citizens.

- 60 Pace Sealey 1984:113–17. The two women repeatedly offered to us as examples of this phenomenon are: (1) Boiotos' mother Plangon, from Dem. 39 and 40 (see in particular 39.26, 40.8, 27). But she was certainly Mantias' wife in reality, despite Mantitheos' tendentious allegations (see Rudhardt 1962:46–7; Humphreys 1989:182–3); (2) Phile's mother, from Isaeus 3. This woman is repeatedly represented by Isaeus as an Athenian citizen *betaira* (3.45, 48, 52, 55, 70f.). But she almost certainly was a legitimate wife, her legitimate daughter Phile being denied succession as a defrauded heiress (Patterson 1990:44, 70–3; Wyse 1904:276). A better bet than both of these, were our source not contemptible, would have been Socrates' second wife, Xanthippe, whom Porphyry says was a citizen (*politiss*), and had a relationship with Socrates (*proslakeisan*) before he married her (FGH 260 F11=Theodoret 12.64–5).
- 61 Harpocration s.v.; Schol. Aristoph. *Eccl.* 1656; Souda s.v. *epikleros*.
- 62 Isaeus 3.73, 8.19; Dem. 57.54. The Demotionid decree is *IG* II² 1237, n.b. esp. ll.109–11; cf. Wade-Gery 1931; Andrewes 1961; Roussel 1976:105, 143–5, 150.
- 63 Cf. Davies 1978:113f.; Brown 1990; Gilula 1980; Fantham 1975.
- 64 Cohen 1984, 1990; Just 1989:68–70; Harrison 1968–71:32–8; Cohen 1990:148 well observes that it was adultery rather than rape that was the 'paradigmatic' sexual crime in Athens.
- 65 Harrison 1968–71:30–2; Just 1989:26–39.
- 66 Theoretically they could not dispose of more than the worth of a bushel of barley on their own authority (Isaeus 10.10.2–3); cf. Kuenen-Janssens 1941. Although wealth could be inherited through female relations, the female relation did not herself gain control of property: *epikleroi*, misleadingly translated 'heiresses' literally 'came in addition to the estates' that fell to the management of a male relative. Some speculate that despite the formal legislation some women did in effect exercise considerable financial control. Cf. Schaps 1979; de Ste.Croix 1970; Foxhall 1989.
- 67 Just 1989:153–279; Could 1980.
- 68 Cf. Walker 1983; Just 1989:106–25.
- 69 Aristotle *Pol.* 1269a.
- 70 On Spartan bastardy in general see: Asheri 1963; Cartledge 1981; Den Boer 1954; Hodkinson 1989; Lotze 1962; MacDowell 1986:46–9; Oliva 1971:174–7. Lotze, MacDowell and Cartledge are the most useful.
- 71 Royal bastardy was a rather different matter, and the word does appear in royal contexts, e.g. Xen. *Hell* 3.31–4 of Leotykhidas, the prince whose throne Agesilaos II usurped; and although the actual word is not used, Kleomenes I is clearly implied to be a bastard by the narrative of Herodotus 5.39–42, and Kleomenes himself successfully bastardizes his coking Demaratos at 6.61–9.
- 72 According to the generally accepted supplement of Lotze 1962:429.
- 73 Cf. Lexicographers Hesychius, Harpocration, Souda, Etymologicum magnum s.vv. *mothax* and *mothon* (a licentious dance, with which these sources confuse *mothax*); Schol. Aristophanes *Wealth* 279, *Knights* 634.
- 74 On *mothakes* see: Lotze 1962; MacDowell 1986:46–51; Oliva 1971:173–7; Bommelaer 1981:37.
- 75 For wedding customs see Plut. *Lyc.* 15; Xen. *Lak.Pol.* 1; for the insignificance of betrothal, cf. Hdt. 6.65.2; Athenaeus 555bc. The fact that one could borrow other people's

- brides for the procreation of non-bastard children (see p. 230) also tells against the legitimizing significance of the marriage ritual. Cf. MacDowell 1986:77–81; Cartledge 1981:99–101; Den Boer 1954:215, 227f.
- 76 *FGH* 90 F103z; cf. Den Boer 1954:217. Nicolaus is a source of erratic reliability, but the other Spartan customs outlined in the surrounding passage seem for the most part sound. The attempt to have the women conceive from fine-looking men certainly fits very well into the Spartan ‘ethics of *teknopoiia*’ as outlined by Den Boer.
- 77 The importance of *teknopoiia* is outlined by Critias DK 88 F32 and Xen. *Lak.Pol.* 1.3; Den Boer 1954:216f.
- 78 Aristotle *Pol.* 1270b1–4.
- 79 N.b.Plutarch’s *Sayings of Spartan Women* (*Mor.* 240–2); those dying in childbed were exempted from the ban on named tombstones (e.g. *IG* V.1 713–14, contravening Plutarch *Lyc.* 27.2; cf. Cartledge 1981:95, 1979:311).
- 80 Cf. Plut. *Lys.* 30.7, *Lyc.* 15.1–3; Xen. *Lak. Pol.* 94f.; cf. Cartledge 1981:95; MacDowell 1986:75–6; Den Boer 1954:218–27.
- 81 Plut. *Lys.* 30.7; Pollux 3.48, 8.40; Cartledge 1981:94; MacDowell 1986:73–4.
- 82 Hdt. 5.40.
- 83 12.6b.8.
- 84 *Lak. Pol.* 1.17.9; *Lyc.* 15.12–13.
- 85 Cf. Cartledge 1981:102–3; MacDowell 1986:86–8; Den Boer 1954:217.
- 86 Plut. *Lyc.* 15.
- 87 Cf. MacDowell 1986:52, 81–2, 94–104, 110; Asheri 1963:2, 5, 12, 14f., 18; Willetts 1954:29; Lane Fox 1985:222. *Pace* Forrest 1968:137; Cartledge 1979:165–9, 308, 1981:98; Hodkinson 1986.
- 88 Plut. *Lyc.* 15.
- 89 Aristotle *Pol.* 1269–70; Eur. *And.* 597–600.
- 90 *Lyc.* 15.
- 91 Plut. *Pyr.* 26–7, 28.5f.
- 92 1981:104, 108.
- 93 On the licence of Spartan women and adultery see: Cartledge 1981:87, 91–2, 103f.; MacDowell 1986:72, 85–7; Den Boer 1954:229.
- 94 The status of Spartan helots in general, whether lower than that of ordinary slaves in other states or higher, is disputed (cf., recently, Talbert 1989). But their status, whatever it was, does not affect my argument, which depends purely on the relative status between men and women, whether among the free or the helots (see p. 225). It is of course conceivable that there existed a different status differential between Spartiate men and women from that between helot men and women, though we do not have sufficient evidence on the helot side to address this question. Given the positive treatment of the sons of helot women by Spartiate men, *mothakes*, the status of the *mothax*’s particular mother (helot) seems to play only a minor role in the definition of their status, and the high status of women *in general* in Spartan society appears to contribute rather more.
- 95 Plut. *Agis* 4.1, 6.7, 7.17, 9.6.
- 96 Cf. Bradford 1986; Cartledge 1981:87–8, 97–103; Bickerman 1975:20; Schaps 1979:88; MacDowell 1986:96, 102, 109; Asheri 1963:19; Kunstler 1987.
- 97 Plat. *Laws* 806c; Arist. *Pol.* 1269b–1270a.
- 98 Plut. *Mor.* 240 anon. 16.
- 99 Youtie 1975; Calderini 1953.

- 99 Youtie 1975; Calderini 1953.
- 100 On Hellenistic Egyptian marriage contracts and bastardy see: Hannick 1976; Hopkins 1980; Modrzejewski 1981, 1984; Montevecchi 1936; Peremans 1981; Pomeroy 1984; Préaux 1959; Reymondon 1964; Taubenschlag 1936; Vatin 1970; Wolff 1939, 1952, 1960, 1966, 1981.
- 101 On the legal background: Wolff 1960, 1966, 1981; Frazer 1972: I 107–9; Modrzejewski 1969:157ff., 1975; Bagnall 1982–3:19; Taubenschlag 1936.
- 102 Cf. Modrzejewski 1984; Peremans 1981; Pomeroy 1984:103–24; Reymondon 1964; Vatin 1970:103ff., 134f., 169.
- 103 Wolff 1939: *passim*, 1952:167ff.; Vatin 1970:19ff, 164–73; Modrzejewski 1981:252–5, 1984:361.
- 104 Vatin 1970:165f., 168, 172 (cf. Préaux 1959:147–50); Modrzejewski 1981:248–50, 1984:360; Wolff 1939:72; Pomeroy 1984:96–8. For *gnesiai gynaiques* as ‘legitimately producing wives’ rather than ‘wives born legitimately’ cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 4.31.
- 105 Cf. Vatin 1970:167f., 202–4, 238; Wolff 1939:67–8, 1952:169f.; Pomeroy 1984:96f.
- 106 Taubenschlag 1936:120–30; Pomeroy 1984:91–3, 110–17, 112, 119–21, 199n64; Montevecchi 1936:100–5; Pestman 1961:35f., 41–8.

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ATHENS' PRETTY FACE

Anti-feminine rhetoric and fifth-century controversy over the Parthenon



Anton Powell

For much of the classical period, as today, the most conspicuous temple of Athens was the shrine of Athena known as the Parthenon. It is often believed by scholars that there is nothing from the period to tell us at any length how contemporary Athenians felt about this building. I hope to show now that such pessimism is mistaken. A careful look at Plutarch's *Life of Pericles* may allow us to revalue elements of that text and to reconstruct part of a controversy from the fifth century about the usefulness of the great building and of its golden statue, and about the values they symbolized. Tracing the contemporary arguments may help in turn towards understanding the virtual silence on the Parthenon of surviving fifth-century literature. Two writers of the fourth century make laudatory, though brief, remarks: the Athenian chauvinist Isocrates states, without naming the Parthenon, that even in his own (post-imperial) day the sacred buildings with which Pericles had adorned the city had helped to make visitors think Athens a city 'worthy to rule not only the Greeks but everyone else too'; Demosthenes named the Parthenon, along with the Propylaia, as among the best-known examples of good things possessed by Athens.¹ However, near the end of the fifth century, Thucydides, from whom we might have expected something of substance, names the Propylaia but never names the Parthenon or makes any clear reference to it in particular.² He himself may have regarded the temple as likely to mislead the readers of his 'possession for ever', in the remote future. He was concerned to establish the unprecedentedly grand scale of the Peloponnesian War, but believed that the scale of Athens' temples and other buildings was so great that it might cause men of later times to think Athens' power double what it had been.³ He contrasted Sparta, which lacked grand buildings, and which might on that account be underestimated. Presumably he believed that the compound process, of judging both states by their buildings and then comparing the results, would have utterly distorted the real ratio of their powers. Notable in particular is the lack of clear reference to the Parthenon in the Funeral Speech of Pericles, as reported by Thucydides. The Athenian leader in his speech did show interest in the concrete amenities, as well as in the abstract qualities, of his city.⁴ And the Parthenon, as we see from the above quotation of Demosthenes, could be presented by an intelligent Athenian politician, less than a century later, as one of the city's most familiar assets.

Rather, Pericles seems to emphasize the moderation of individual Athenians in their spending on the pursuit of beauty.⁵ The shadow of Sparta lies over much of Pericles' speech; in his elaborate comparison of Athenians and Spartans he may have sought to emulate the charismatic austerity of the latter.⁶ But our reconstruction of the controversy over the making of the Parthenon will suggest that, in addition, Pericles may have had cause to look back on the building of the temple with embarrassment, as a monument to political misjudgement.

RECONSTRUCTING FROM PLUTARCH: REASON FOR OPTIMISM?

Plutarch's treatment of the controversy about building has been in varying degrees discounted. Our main response to this negative approach will be a positive procedure, trying to show that much of Plutarch's colourful account fits impressively into the political and social climate of the mid-fifth century. But the negative arguments must be briefly considered. In the most energetic attack, Andrewes concluded that the report of debate between Pericles and conservative opponents (notably Thoukydides son of Melesias) was 'worthless'.⁷ Stadter, in his valuable commentary on the *Life of Pericles*, has a less radical approach, but suggests that Plutarch created details of the debate by the use of biographer's licence, 'perhaps on not much more evidence than his knowledge of Thoukydides' opposition to Pericles, of the criticism of extravagance in later authors such as Demetrius of Phaleron, and of similar debates over public spending in his own day'; 'The phrasing and probably many if not all the arguments are Plutarch's'.⁸

First, some brief general points concerning Plutarch's value for the political historian of classical Greece. Claims are sometimes made informally to the effect that Plutarch is only as good as his sources; detailed scholarship, on the other hand, seems often to reflect a view that Plutarch is as bad as his sources. Negative opinions of the biographer's worth may arise in part from the principle on which the material in his *Lives* is nowadays selected for attention. Where, as in the *Life of Nikias*, Plutarch follows at length a good, surviving, contemporary source, we normally concentrate on that source to the virtual neglect of Plutarch, since our interest is in the facts of classical Greece, not in the biographer himself. We thus remain insufficiently exposed to the conclusion that, in general, where Plutarch is using a good source, in spite of the embellishments and omissions made by himself, the result is still a useful account. A recent commentator has stressed Plutarch's care when paraphrasing his sources.⁹ This would ideally be remembered on those occasions where we *do* pay Plutarch some attention: where his detail cannot be found in an early surviving source. Occasionally he has been convicted of clumsy error (though not of conscious fiction).¹⁰ But those who accuse Plutarch of having virtually invented the many details of the controversy over the Athenian building programme, or of having adopted uncritically a rhetorical exercise composed in post-classical times, have not provided parallels from elsewhere in Plutarch's *œuvre* of error at once so gross and so protracted. Other aspects of the *Life of Pericles*, some discredited, some vindicated, suggest that both caution and hope are in order when we approach his treatment of the controversy on building. To give

examples: on the negative side, firmly disbelieved, at least as regards its dating, is the story of Pericles' unsuperstitious reaction to a solar eclipse; there was no such eclipse at the time claimed.¹¹ Plutarch suggests that cleruchies were established by Pericles in part to relieve Athens of 'an idle and interfering mob'.¹² Plutarch's word here for 'interfering' is *πολυπράγμονος*. But we have a strong suggestion from Thucydides that Pericles publicly refused to use that word as a pejorative; in reality it was a conspicuous part of fifth-century anti-democratic cant.¹³ Plutarch is perhaps at his weakest in ascribing motives; he may have been led into error here by applying the political psychology of Rome, where despised and land-hungry urban poor were indeed manipulated with schemes of colonial settlement. On the positive side, non-psychological elements of Plutarch's account of the cleruchies have been confirmed as probable by modern study of Athenian inscriptions: the identity of places colonized, and the chronological setting at mid-fifth century.¹⁴ Two of Plutarch's references to Thoukydides son of Melesias prove especially encouraging. Plutarch describes him, figuratively, as wrestling with Pericles for domination of the assembly; Thoukydides is also quoted as using an image from wrestling when describing his attempts to better Pericles in argument.¹⁵ If we lacked further information on the subject, we might well regard these passages as involving uninspired metaphor of Plutarch's own making. But it has been shown, by Wade-Gery, that Thoukydides had in his own day a famous background in the aristocratic sport of wrestling.¹⁶ Plutarch does not indicate as much explicitly; either he knew it, and was in a position to generate the wrestling metaphors himself, or—more likely—the imagery reflects knowledge of Thoukydides' background, and perhaps of his style of rhetoric, on the part of a source used by Plutarch.¹⁷ We recall that rhetoric from the party of Thoukydides is central to Plutarch's account of controversy about the Parthenon.

Public argument about the building programme is reported in chapters 12 and 14 of the *Pericles*. Much other detail on the construction, including excerpts from fifth-century comedy, is located (in chs 12–13) between the sections on the formal public argument. And all of the above is placed in a frame (chs 11.1–14.3) formed by detail of the struggle for ascendancy between Pericles and Thoukydides son of Melesias. After a reference to the death of Kimon, we read of Thoukydides being put forward by the aristocratic faction, as a leader to challenge Pericles; Thoukydides was 'less of a warrior than Kimon, but more of a civilian politician'.¹⁸ Pericles reacts by introducing a series of schemes to please the public: some involved 'educated pleasure' (*οὐκ ἀμούσοις ἡδοναῖς*); among others mentioned are the cleruchies (ch. 11).¹⁹ The chapters on the building programme begin with the words: 'But what gave the greatest pleasure (*ἡδονήν*)...to Athens...'. Plutarch's material on the buildings, and on the associated public argument, is pretty clearly presented as part of a wider power-struggle. The last reported elements of the building debate are immediately followed by the record of Thoukydides' defeat and ostracism; Plutarch then passes to other topics.

Below is a translation of those sections of Plutarch which bear most directly on public debate about the building programme:

the building of sacred structures: of all Pericles' policies it was this which his personal enemies most kept disparaging and slandering in the assemblies,

crying out that the [Athenian] people [or ‘democracy’: *δῆμος*] had lost its reputation and was being heavily criticized for having transferred to itself the common fund of the Greeks which had been at Delos. ‘Pericles has removed the most plausible excuse which the people had available against critics, namely that it took the common fund from Delos out of fear of the barbarians and was guarding it in a safe place. Greece now seems to be wilfully degraded with a terrible degrading arrogance and to be the victim of blatant tyranny, as she sees us using what she contributed under necessity for the war to gild our city and to put on her a pretty face, like an *ἀλαζών* woman, decked out with expensive stones and statues and thousand-talent temples.’ So Pericles informed the people that they owed the allies no account of the money, given that they fought on the allies’ behalf and ward off the barbarians, while the allies provided as their contribution not a horse, not a ship, not a hoplite but only money. Money belonged not to the givers but to the receivers, if they provided the service for which the money was given. Now that it had acquired all the necessary physical resources for war, the city must divert its ample means to acquiring things which, when completed, would be a source of everlasting fame, and which, while still under construction, would provide wealth for the present. Every kind of work, a variety of functions, would be involved, giving a stimulus to every craft, finding employment for every hand, providing wages for almost the whole city, which would be at one and the same time both embellished and fed from its own resources.

(ch. 12)

As the orators of Thoukydides’ party kept shouting accusations against Pericles of squandering the housekeeping money (*σπαθῶντος*) and of wasting the income, Pericles asked the people in an assembly whether they thought that a great deal had been spent. They replied ‘A very great deal indeed’, to which he responded ‘In that case, let us consider that the spending has been done not by you but by me; I’ll put as the inscription on the sacred structures that they were a private offering of my own.’ At this, it may be that they admired his magnanimity or that they were ambitious not to lose the glory themselves for the great works. Anyway, there was uproar: they shouted that he should pay the money from public funds and spare no expense. Eventually Pericles engaged in a contest of ostracism with Thoukydides...and had him expelled...

(ch. 14)

On what grounds have these sections of Plutarch been discounted? The reported claim that the allies contributed ‘not a horse, not a ship, not a hoplite but only money’ has been attacked in modern times for being plainly untrue; Khios, Lesbos and Samos were still, in the early 440s, seen as contributing ships and men rather than money to Athenian-led campaigns.²⁰ Does this imply that Pericles cannot in fact have made the claim, or one very like it? In the first place, if he had made in his speech a qualification, such as ‘the allies, *most of them*, contribute not a horse, not a ship, etc.’, so dull a thing as the qualification would very likely have been lost when

his speech was abbreviated and transmitted to Plutarch. Also, chauvinist overstatement of the kind attributed here to the Athenian politician is in fact familiar from the fifth century. Thucydides shows an Athenian speaker claiming in the late 430s that Athens had fought alone against the Persians at Marathon; it was, of course, well known that she had been supported in the battle by allies from Plataia.²¹ Similarly, Plataians themselves, pleading for their lives in 427, claimed that their state had been the only one of Boiotia to join the anti-Persian cause in 480–479—‘a notable falsehood’, observed Gomme, recalling the roles of Thespiiai and Haliartos.²² But such defences of Plutarch, and the objection to which they respond, may just be beside the point. Any states perceived as contributing in kind, in the form of horses, ships or hoplites rather than in cash, might be understood to be outside the frame of Pericles’ argument. The reported objection of the Athenian conservatives was that the accumulated cash of the alliance was being spent in an offensively selfish way; but it could be argued, plausibly if disingenuously, that contributors in kind were unlikely to be among those most offended, since they had not contributed the cash that was being spent. In short, the allies relevant to the argument might seem to be exactly those who contributed not horses, not ships and not hoplites.²³

It has been suggested that Plutarch is unrealistic in portraying Pericles’ conservative opponents as preaching against the selfish exploitation of the allies by Athens. ‘There was not much comfort for the allies on the right wing of Athenian politics’ wrote Andrewes. He cited a passage of Thucydides (VIII 48 6) in which Phrynikhos, speaking in 412/11, strongly asserted that the conservative gentry, the *καλοὶ καγαθοὶ* of Athens, oppressed the allies while the *demos* acted as the allies’ refuge. But a reading of that passage in context shows that Phrynikhos is intending to be paradoxical, to show that the respective roles of conservatives and *demos* are not as commonly conceived, but the reverse.²⁴ The point is shown most clearly by Phrynikhos’ claim, in the same sentence, that the *demos* acted as the discipliner, the *σωφρονιστής*, of the conservative gentry. This is a deliberate and transparent inversion of the conventional, right-wing view, according to which proper discipline, *σωφροσύνη*, was the distinctive possession of the gentry, and their chief title to rule over the *demos*.²⁵ (Oligarchy was indeed called on occasion, even by Thucydides.)²⁶ The Old Oligarch boasted that good, wealthy conservatives (*οἱ... χρηστοί*) at Athens gave protection to their opposite numbers in allied states.²⁷ For testing the realism of Plutarch’s account here, it is far from decisive that wealthy conservatives did not in fact act with consistent virtue towards the allies; what matters is whether they publicly claimed virtue in this sphere, and that seems to be established.

We must deal very briefly with other objections made to the authenticity of Plutarch’s account. It has been suggested that he misrepresented Thoukydides son of Melesias as having ‘no record in the field’, whereas Thoukydides seems to have been a soldier of some distinction. But Plutarch does not make this error; he states, rather, that Thoukydides was ‘less of a warrior than Kimon, but more of a civilian politician’.²⁸ Almost every successful general of the period will have been less of a warrior than Kimon, especially in the view of Plutarch, for whom Kimon was a hero, unparalleled after his own time in representing a Greece militant against the barbarian.²⁹ Stadter, who makes an important contribution to the analysis of Plutarch’s language in the *Pericles*, points out that some of the terms prominent in the account

of the building arguments are in fact characteristic elements of Plutarch's personal vocabulary.³⁰ This, however, might have been predicted, without unusual scepticism. It is not Plutarch's practice to transcribe exactly even his best prose sources; when he paraphrases, his linguistic tastes will show. We do not argue that Plutarch has made no errors in his account; rather that his account may well be, as so often, roughly correct. Plutarch reports Pericles as offering to pay in person for **τῶν ἀναθημάτων**—a word that can apply both to religious statues and religious buildings (ch. 14). This in context could easily be taken to include the Parthenon and its precious statue, and the little we know of Pericles' personal wealth does not suggest that such an offer would have been realistic.³¹ However, on a careful reading there is nothing in the words attributed to Pericles to show whether all or merely some sacred structures were meant. Members of Pericles' family did indeed finance, or offer to finance, a public work; the names of his sons Xanthippos (certainly) and Parallos (almost certainly) appear in the fragmentary inscription now known as the 'Springhouse Decree' [*IG*³49] (the phrase containing their names is: **Παρ]αλοι και Χσανθιπποι**), in the context of finance for the project. On the date of this decree, there is no consensus between the early and late 430s; it may be that Plutarch has, because of the shared theme of controversy about expensive building, placed with material from the 440s an episode which occurred a few years later.³² Pericles' reported offer—generous—seeming, rhetorical, quite likely not to be accepted and plainly made to protect his own political standing—seems in keeping with the offer which Thucydides reports him as making at the start of the Peloponnesian War: to donate his estate in Attica to the people of Athens, if the invading Spartans singled it out and spared it in their ravaging.³³

RECONSTRUCTING THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE PARTHENON: A POSITIVE CASE

Perhaps what has made some modern scholars reluctant to grant that Plutarch even approximates to truth on the controversy about building is the perceived absence from his account of material which fulfils the following conditions: it must correspond in detail with information from other sources but not in such a way as to be constructible by guesswork from that information. Now this would be a harsh test, which in other contexts would often cause us to reject valid detail because of the mere accident that other, subtly compatible, material has not survived, or that material conducive to guesswork has survived. But we shall now try to show that this test is one that Plutarch's account would pass.

In the rhetoric reported by Plutarch Athens is likened to an **ἀλαζών** woman. The point of both adjective and noun has normally been missed, and the comparison has, in consequence, been deprived of its special fitness. The adjective will be dealt with first. In perhaps the most influential translations, **ἀλαζών** is rendered as 'vain' or 'wanton'.³⁴ However, it happens that **ἀλαζών** is, for us, lexicographically privileged; Aristotle defines the term at length in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Theophrastos gives a sketch in his *Characters* of the **ἀλαζών** man. The word means 'pretentious', 'falsely boastful'. Theophrastos wrote of 'pretending

(προσοίησις) to good things which do not exist'; Aristotle, with characteristic care, stated that 'the ἀλαζών is given to pretending (προσοποιητικός) about creditable things which do not exist or which are less than he claims.' According to Theophrastos, a typical act of an ἀλαζών man might be to make a show of sending his slave to the bank, when in fact he had no money (or 'one drachma') there.³⁵ Stadter, who has translated the term as 'vain and pretentious', observes that it is usually applied to men; he suggests that its use here of a woman presents something of a puzzle.³⁶ It may indeed be puzzlement which has caused translators to reach for the inappropriate notion of wantonness, behind which may lie an English cliché such as 'tarting up'. Why should Athens with its new building have been compared with a pretentious woman, rather than a man?

In the early fourth century Xenophon describes an Athenian woman seeking to make herself more beautiful. Three processes are mentioned. She applies white lead—to her face (?)—to suggest fair skin, red dye from the plant alkanet (perhaps as rouge to the cheeks), and puts on built-up shoes. She is not acting in a wanton or whore-like way; she is of virtuous character, brought up in the respected seclusion of a wealthy family and now married to a man of high status.³⁷ The three forms of cosmetic correspond with the visual impression which the new Parthenon would make, or be expected to make. The temple would make the Acropolis stand a little higher, as elevated shoes would do to a woman. The red dye would correspond with the paint, of red and blue, with which much of the Parthenon was adorned.³⁸ Most strikingly and most extensively, the newly-cut marble of the columns would gleam whitely (one Greek word for marble, μάρμαρος, was cognate with μαρμαίρειν, 'to glitter'); correspondingly, the main expanse of make-up on a woman would probably be the white lead. The phrase 'like a pretentious woman' is used in Plutarch's account to amplify the term 'putting on a pretty face' (καλλωπίζοντας); it has been suggested that this Greek term may have been used as a favourite of Plutarch's,³⁹ but its use here may also have seemed fitting, for good reason, to his source. That the Acropolis might be seen in the mid-fifth century as Athens' head is shown by a Delphic response, recorded by Herodotus and no doubt famous at the time, in which the Athenian citadel is described as the city's ἄκρα κάρηνα ('high heads').⁴⁰

Xenophon's lady, it is true, is admonished by her husband—the writer's mouthpiece—for her cosmetic efforts. But his point is not that she should look less sexy. In fact, he urges her to make herself more alluring, by taking exercise, so that she can better compete with the young slave-women for his attention. Rather his objection is to the deceit implicit in her action. He compares this deceit with the action of a man exaggerating his wealth to impress a woman.⁴¹ May there lie behind this comparison an idea that the feminine cosmetic process also involved a false claim to wealth? The question is complicated by the fact that ideas of beauty often reflect, consciously or not, the accidental attributes of the rich. White lead was used to imitate white skin, the badge of a woman whose family had sufficient wealth to keep her cloistered, away from such outdoor tasks as water-carrying or retailing.⁴² (For a Roman poet, sun-tan in a woman was a despicable trace of peasant labour.)⁴³ Tallness likewise suggested grand lineage. Two contrasting Platonic passages make the point clearly. In one there occurs the phrase 'taller, more noble and more

handsome'.⁴⁴ In the other, diminutives are repeatedly used, both of concrete and abstract subjects, to indicate vulgarity; littleness and lowness of social status have become (as for some speakers of English) synonymous. People of low status are **ἀνθρωπίσκοι**; the craft of such a person is a **τεχνίον**; the imagined individual on whom Plato finally focuses is a 'tinker, bald and small'. The tinker is described as recently freed from slavery and got up in new clothing; in his smallness and unaccustomed finery he was clearly, to the eye of the grandee, a hideous upstart.⁴⁵

When Plutarch describes the orators of Thoukydides' group as attacking Pericles for wasting funds, or for 'squandering the housekeeping money' as we have rather inadequately translated it above, the verb used for 'squandering', **σπαθῶντος**, is a rare and interesting one. It is drawn from the vocabulary of weaving, where its meaning was: 'to strike down the weft'. Since to compress the weft unnecessarily would be to use too much wool, the word came to be used metaphorically of waste. It had, of course, strong feminine associations, weaving being woman's work; the first datable use of the verb is in Aristophanes' *Clouds* (1. 55) (of 423 or a little later),⁴⁶ where Strepsiades, as part of a complaint against his wife's expensive ways, says:

ὦ γύναι, λίαν σπαθαῖς.

'wife, you are laying it on too thick.'

To lay wool on very thickly could be done on purpose, for display, which, like conspicuous waste today, might provoke accusations of flashiness, of display without due substance. Photios (s.v. **σπαθαῖν**) cites from Menander's *Misoumenos* a case of used, as he says, in the sense of **ἀλαζονεύομαι** ('be pretentious'). (Compare the traditional British taunt 'all fur coat and no knickers', used against women to mean flashiness, in one sense or two, but also applicable more widely, to a district seen as pretentious.)⁴⁷ Surviving usages of **σπαθαῖω** from the classical period are mostly from comedy,⁴⁸ perhaps because a word suggestive of women's humdrum activity was thought more fitting for dialogue in the street-Attic style than for formal prose. However, a scholiast on the above passage of the *Clouds* (1. 53), noting that **σπαθαῖω** meant 'strike down the weft excessively' and 'spend unstintingly', states that the word was found often in the orators. There is seemingly only one instance of the term's now surviving with a metaphorical sense in an orator of the classical period. At Demosthenes XIX 43 **ἐσπαθαῖτο** is used in parallel with **ἐδημηγορεῖτο**, in a passage where deceit is described (**φανακισθῆναι** and **ψεύδεται** occur in the immediate context). It may seem, then, that the word **σπαθῶντος**, attributed by Plutarch to the party of Thoukydides, corresponds—in its overtones of effeminacy and false boasting about wealth—with the image of the pretentious woman, the **ἀλαζὼν γυνή**. But there is a difference. The 'pretentious woman' was, on the face of it, Athens; **σπαθῶντος** is applied directly to Pericles. The implication that he himself was acting both effeminately and pretentiously now rises to the surface.

The Athens of Pericles might, then, be portrayed with some wit as a woman laying exaggerated claim, in a familiar way, to wealth and high status. So much might be a point worthy of comedy. However, the comparison would gain political force if it were seriously perceived that Pericles' policy of building had about it something effeminate, and pretentious as to money; the more so if deceit was seen as intentional. On the matter of deceit: in the first place, Thucydides' belief that Athens' public buildings would make later Greeks much overestimate her strength

should have some bearing on the Greeks of Pericles' day; surely some of them would be less hard-headed than Thucydides as to what the buildings implied in terms of power. When Thucydides writes that Greeks of later times would imagine Athens' previous power as double what it had been, he need not imply that Pericles' contemporaries were immune to all such exaggeration; it may only be that the degree of contemporary exaggeration was significantly less than double. Elsewhere Thucydides makes clear that the idea of using high and conspicuous expenditure on religious objects to suggest military power was known at Athens in the late fifth century. And we may strongly suspect, though not prove, that it was remembered as Periclean.

Thucydides (VI 16–18) presents a speech made in 415 by Alkibiades, a person linked by contemporaries with Pericles; Alkibiades had been, as a child, Pericles' ward after the death of his own father Kleinias. In the speech Alkibiades blatantly seeks to pass off his own policies as Periclean. (In his second sentence he makes a reference to his ancestors, *προγόνους*, a category which might recall Pericles by association.)⁴⁹ One device he propounds is the military and political use of religious spending. High spending had been done by Alkibiades on a chariot race at a festival in honour of Zeus, the Olympic Games:

The things for which I am being loudly criticised bring...benefit to my native city. For, whereas the Greeks previously had expected our city to have been exhausted by war, they have come to believe that she is even more powerful than in reality she is, because of my brilliant show in the sacred mission to Olympia, as a result of my having entered seven chariots, a number never before entered by a private individual, and come first and second and fourth and in all other respects laid on a show to match my victory. It is a convention that this sort of thing brings prestige, but from what one does people also get an impression of what one could do, of one's power. Moreover, whatever I do inside Athens which brings me distinction, paying for [religious] choruses and whatever else, naturally produces envy in my fellow citizens, but to visitors from other cities this too suggests strength.⁵⁰

Scholars have observed many points of resemblance between the speech from which this is an excerpt and speeches of Pericles as presented by Thucydides.⁵¹ Some of the most striking are as follows:

Pericles

'Our fathers...advanced their affairs to the present level' (*οἱ . . . πατέρες ἡμῶν . . . ἐς τὰδε προήγαγον αὐτά*)⁵²

'...we [Athenians] alone bring help to others fearlessly from the confidence of freedom rather than from calculation as to what is to our advantage.'⁵⁴

Alkibiades

'...our fathers...raised their fortunes to the present level (*. . . οἱ πατέρες . . . οἱ πατέρες*)⁵³

'We acquired our empire...eagerly going to the help of whoever made an appeal to us...since hesitation or pedantic distinctions about whom to help...'⁵⁵

'The empire is something from which you cannot now withdraw...to give it up would be dangerous.'⁵⁶

'...we cannot make judicious distinctions as to how far we wish our empire to extend; we are compelled, since we have reached this position, to plot against some and to refuse to let go others, since if we were not to have empire over other people, there would be a danger that others would rule over us.'⁵⁷

Both men utter defensive self-praise.⁵⁸ Pericles repeatedly cites the quality of non-interference, ἀπραγμοσύνη, attacking the widespread, effectively oligarchic view that it was a virtue both in ordinary citizens (who should stay out of politics) and in states (which should, unlike Athens, not seek empire). Alkibiades does likewise; it is surely significant that of the eleven usages of ἀπραγ —to be found in Thucydides' history, four occur in speeches of Pericles, three in this speech of Alkibiades.⁵⁹ However, it has also been observed that Alkibiades distorts Periclean themes in a characteristic, egocentric way.⁶⁰ Pericles argues that all imperial states are resented (λυπηρούς) by contemporaries, but hatred of them proves short-lived, whereas the glorious memory of their brilliance (λυπηρούς) lasts for ever. Alkibiades, thinking of himself, argues that individuals of special brilliance (λαμπρότης) are resented (λυπηρούς) by their contemporaries, but in later times both individuals and the city are eager to claim a connection with them.⁶¹ In Thucydides' view, then, Alkibiades now produced, or might reasonably have produced, a loaded pastiche of Periclean speeches from at least three different occasions. For the purposes of the present argument it need not be the case that the words or ideas of Alkibiades have been accurately presented by Thucydides; it need not even be the case that the historical Alkibiades sought to strike Periclean attitudes at all. All that needs to be true is that Thucydides believed appropriate in a Periclean context the argument about military use of religious spending, and that in that belief he was correct. Alkibiades boasts that his personal spending has made other Greeks overestimate the power of Athens, in a manner useful to the city. If the historical Pericles had indeed made a similar claim for the city's most expensive religious project during his ascendancy, the construction of the Parthenon and its statue, that might help to explain the 'pretentious' element in a rival politician's taunt about a pretentious woman.

How does this suggested reconstruction of a Periclean argument from the 440s square with the rhetoric and policy of Pericles for which we have best evidence, from the beginning of the Peloponnesian War? If the Parthenon was indeed intended to signal wealth and military power, for whom was the signal intended? No doubt in part Athens' subjects, allies and potential allies, but also and perhaps pre-eminently Sparta and her allies, with whom Athens had been at war until 451 and was, in the early 440s, engaged in a precarious five-year truce.⁶² Can Pericles be shown for certain to have wished at any time to communicate to Sparta an idea of Athenian strength? Thucydides reports him as saying in 430, when seeking to dissuade the Athenians from offering peace-terms, 'do not make it obvious to the Spartans...that you are weighed down by the present hardships' (Λακεδαιμονίοις . . . μήτε ἔνδηλοι ἔστε τοῖς παροῦσι πόνους βαρυνόμενοι).⁶³ On the eve of the Peloponnesian War

Pericles wanted to signal to Sparta about Athens' resolution: 'By taking a stand you [Athenians] would make it clear to them [the Spartans] that they should deal with you more on a basis of equality.'⁶⁴ The Athenians should not fight over, or lament, the houses and land which lay exposed to attack outside the walls of the city; 'if I thought I could persuade you, I would tell you to go out yourselves and ravage them, and show the Peloponnesians that *those* things (τούτων γε ἔνεκα) will not make you bow the knee.'⁶⁵ For Pericles in 431, Athens' attitude to war might be signalled to Sparta by policy towards buildings.

For convincing Spartans, famed for their mistrust of mere words,⁶⁶ concrete demonstration might seem particularly appropriate. Themistokles is shown playing on the distinction between unreliable words and visible fact when manipulating the Spartan authorities; he told them, according to Thucydides, not to be swayed by *words*, but to trust good Spartans who would *see* for themselves.⁶⁷ What they were to see, in this case, was the reality concerning a reported Athenian building project, the city wall constructed in the 470s. Sparta tried by diplomacy to abort that project. In the early 450s, when Athens made another large construction, the long, military walls to the sea, Sparta invaded central Greece and, in co-operation with pro-oligarchic Athenians who wanted the long walls stopped, fought a full-scale battle against Athens at Tanagra. There was, therefore, every reason for politically minded Athenians in the early 440s to expect that Sparta would pay close attention as another great building project began, and would ask what it signified.

Several of Pericles' moves against Sparta can be seen as signals, concrete or verbal, with a common theme. On the eve of the Peloponnesian War, Athens' diplomatic retorts to Sparta showed a vigorous but restrained reciprocity. The Athenians met Sparta's demand that Athens cease to exclude Megarians by a demand that Sparta cease the exclusion of Athenians and others. Athens stated that she would give her subjects autonomy, as Sparta demanded, if the Spartans gave full autonomy to the cities under their own influence. Athens would not start a war against Sparta, but would fight back if Sparta attacked her. All these diplomatic points were made on Pericles' advice.⁶⁸ Sparta had tried to divide Athens by recalling an ancient religious taint which affected Pericles; Athens reminded Spartans of similar pollution affecting themselves.⁶⁹ Sparta began her aggression by invading Attica in 431, and repeated the process in later years; Athens responded by yearly, or twice-yearly, invasions of the Megarid, led at first by Pericles in person.⁷⁰ Pericles also proposed the policy of retaliation whereby, if the Spartans occupied fortifications in Attica, Athens should do likewise in enemy territory.⁷¹

Similar reciprocity can perhaps be found in the period at which the Parthenon was begun. A Spartan force took over the shrine at Delphi and gave control to the Delphians; after the Spartans had left, an Athenian force took over Delphi and gave control to the Phokians. So much Thucydides states, with repetition of terms and word order.⁷² Plutarch adds that Pericles led the Athenian force in person, although this may perhaps be merely a case of the biographic vortex dragging the writer's hero to the centre of attention. But as a priest of Delphi, Plutarch may very well be right when he describes the near-symmetry of Athens' epigraphic activity at Delphi on this occasion. The Spartans had recorded their right to *promanteia*, priority in

consulting the oracle, with an inscription on the forehead of 'the bronze wolf; Pericles then recorded the Athenians' own grant of *promanteia* on the wolf's right flank.⁷³ This, perhaps, was as close as the Athenians could get to symmetry; it may have avoided destructive, aggressive-seeming action, such as effacing the Spartans' inscription.

We have, then, an impressive set of reciprocal actions associated with Pericles. When we recall the boast in his Funeral Speech about the versatility of Athenians, and his refusal in 431 to allow Sparta to dictate to Athens,⁷⁴ it should seem unlikely that these actions resulted from lack of imagination, or from a belief that Sparta had the right to set the limits of conflict. Rather, it may seem that Pericles and the Athenian assembly wished to signal in deed and word that they had no ambition to conquer Sparta, but would hit back as far as was possible without raising Spartan fear of such an ambition. This would match Pericles' stated aim in the Peloponnesian War, of 'winning through', of triumphantly surviving rather than conquering; his strategy contained no apparent device for making Sparta surrender.⁷⁵ Also, to advertise Athens' lack of desire to subdue Sparta would have addressed what Thucydides, an admirer of Periclean strategy, believed to be a main cause of Sparta's own aggression: her fear of Athens.⁷⁶ How, as a signal to Sparta, might the building of the Parthenon have related to an Athenian strategy of vigorous restraint?

News would be expected to reach other Greek states in the early 440s that the Athenians were preparing to spend lavishly on the Parthenon and its statue, and perhaps on other decorative structures such as the Odeion and the Propylaia, if those were conceived at this period.⁷⁷ Athenians could predict that Sparta would react to the news, at least when it was confirmed by the beginning of actual building, by contrasting the new project with the two previous building schemes which had been the occasions of Spartan intervention, diplomatic or military. Those projects had been overtly military, reducing Athens' exposure to Spartan attack and thus reducing Sparta's power. The new project signalled peaceful aspirations; great resources which could have been spent on warlike projects were being committed to civic decoration and to religion. But the signal was not one of uncomplicated pacifism. The income from the allies of Athens which made possible such splendour would continue, and might be used for war in future. Even the gold which formed the clothing of Athena's statue was removable, available to be melted for coin in a military emergency. Pericles himself is reported as saying as much, at the start of the Peloponnesian War. According to Thucydides he put the weight of the gold at 40 talents. (Philokhoros later gave the figure of 44.)⁷⁸ The significance of such figures may sometimes be missed. The talent weight most familiar to historians is of silver. But fragmentary inscriptions, from the years around 440, give accounts for the making of Athena's statue and confirm that Pericles' figure of 40 must refer to talents of gold, which had a very different value. The prevailing ratio for the relative values of silver and gold in the Aegean world in the late archaic and classical periods was 1:13 1/3, or thereabouts. (The accounts for Athena's statue, the 'golden statue', ἄγαλμα χρυσοῦν, as it was officially called, suggest that the Athenians for this purpose applied a ratio of 1:14.)⁷⁹ So, following Thucydides' figure, the golden adornment of Athena was worth more than 530 talents of silver. (If Philokhoros' figure is right, the total would be near 600.) These sums are much higher than the highest annual total for financial tribute received

from the Athenian empire, as estimated on the basis of surviving inscriptions—that for 433/2, when approximately 400 talents seem to have come in.⁸⁰ So Athena's statue was a strategic treasury in itself. And the value of its disposable gold was rather greater than the total cost of building the Parthenon, according to modern calculation.⁸¹ Yet the golden centrepiece, with its military potential, symbolized the claim that Athens' first preference was for peace; ideally the goddess would keep her clothing.⁸² The pre-eminence of money in determining the outcome of war was an idea which Pericles stressed.⁸³ The Parthenon, as a deliberate signal of military strength combined with peaceful intentions, would fit well with the pattern of Periclean reciprocity traced above. The intended message to Sparta might almost be summarized by the words of (if not the spirit behind) the Victorian song (of 1878) which gave rise to the word 'jingoism':

We don't want to fight,
yet by Jingo! if we do,
we've got the ships,
we've got the men,
and got the money too.⁸⁴

One modern objection to Plutarch's account of the building controversy has been that it contains no reference to Athens' precarious foreign-policy situation in the early 440s. The conflict with Sparta was unresolved; even during the five-year truce from 451 Sparta (as we have seen) was still active militarily in central Greece, and in 447 (or 446) Sparta's Boiotian allies won a major victory over Athens.⁸⁵ However, we can well imagine why the patriotic Plutarch in the early second century AD might wish to play down reference to the internecine wars of Greek states, which had helped to reduce the latter to mere units within a Roman province, and to concentrate instead on glorious achievement which endured to his own day as evidence in Greece's favour.⁸⁶ It would have been awkward indeed for him to view some of the most spectacular Greek building as owing its existence, in part, to that very internecine conflict. Plutarch the biographer may not have provided a full political context for the building controversy, but an appropriate foreign-policy setting can surely be perceived. If Pericles and a majority in the Athenian assembly were trying to preserve the truce of 451 and to extend it beyond five years, their peaceful building schemes might have seemed a contribution to that end. This assumption would also help to explain the silence about the building programme in the Periclean Funeral Speech of 431/0. In that year, after Sparta had confirmed her hostility with a destructive invasion of Attica, most Athenians would probably have believed that any peace-making intention behind the public buildings had come to little or nothing. In these circumstances, thoughts of the Parthenon could have been a political embarrassment. The building might be seen, in part, as an expensive and futile essay in concrete diplomacy.

If the building project was commended to the assembly as promoting peace with Sparta, that might also help to explain a recourse, on the part of Pericles' conservative opponents, to ridicule involving ideas of femininity. Domestic enemies of the project were in a difficult position. Their private, deep objections to the scheme were probably that it rewarded the common people of Athens for possessing an empire, and thus

cemented *demokratia* (both at home and in the empire); that it enhanced the popularity of Pericles; that it further undermined the influence of the wealthy in Athens by weakening the tradition that grand public buildings were conferred not by the assembly, disposing of its own funds, but by the patronage, the private funds, of rich individual politicians, such as Kimon.⁸⁷ Also, once the *demos* accepted that imperial revenue might be spent on peaceful and pleasant schemes at home, renewal of expensive war in the Kimonian style against Persia became less likely. None of these objections could be expected to appeal widely in the popular assembly. If he was seen to be aiming for peace with Sparta, Pericles was stealing the clothes of the wealthy, conservative faction; their tendency, from the time of Kimon, to seek a peaceful accommodation with Sparta no longer formed a very distinctive element in their political prospectus.

Short of arguments, Thoukydides and his conservative friends might well turn to derision. There was nothing inherently wrong with seeking peace with Sparta, they might claim, but Pericles' way of going about it was effeminate and vulgar. (When, at the start of the Peloponnesian War, Pericles refused to allow a full-scale hoplite battle against Sparta, his leadership was, according to Plutarch, presented in songs and jokes within Athens as unmanly, *ἄνανδρον*.)⁸⁸ Kimon (their audience would recall) had sought Sparta's friendship by the most manly and esteemed route, in the field, by hoplite fighting as Sparta's ally, against the helots at Mount Ithome. But to promote peace by building within Athens was a stay-at-home method, requiring no courage. Making clothes for the statue of a goddess was woman's work; Athenian females traditionally made the *peplos* for the ancient, most revered statue of Athena. Thoukydides, publicly linked with the virile sport of wrestling, might be well placed to decry a policy with feminine overtones.

In comedy, and in other contemporary literature, Pericles, and Kimon before him, were much mocked for their relations with women. Kimon, it was said, had had an affair with his sister, Elpinike. Plutarch also names two women, Asteria and Mnestra, mentioned by an elegiac poet, Melanthios, as objects of Kimon's affection. Pericles was accused of having sex with his own daughter-in-law; Plutarch indignantly records this as a false claim passed on 'even' by the prose-writer Stesimbrotos of Thasos. The biographer also states that comic poets wrote of Pericles' having affairs with the citizen women who came to inspect the art of the building project; the wife of one Menippos is named in this connection.⁸⁹ But, beyond what may have been standard humour about sexual impropriety, a more distinctive line of mockery seems to have been directed towards Pericles. It involved Aspasia, Pericles' mistress, or perhaps better 'second-class wife', to follow the phrase employed by Judeich.⁹⁰ Aspasia is, paradoxically, little noticed today. Social historians have been chiefly concerned to reconstruct norms within the sphere of women's existence at Athens; Aspasia, abnormal by being a Milesian at Athens, a mover in the sphere of men although probably of free status all her life rather than slave or freed, and perhaps not even classifiable as a *hetaira*, has been somewhat neglected.⁹¹ But the very abnormality which has caused recent neglect was a guarantee of notoriety in her own day. Aspasia is familiar to us in part from the fantasy in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, in which theft by Megarians of prostitutes belonging to Aspasia led to Pericles' firm stand against Megara and the onset of the Peloponnesian War.⁹² Much of the humour of this lay in a point deliberately

left implicit in the play: the idea that Aspasia could influence Pericles to that degree; that Pericles and his woman had reversed roles. Aristophanes was probably not the first comedian to play with such an idea. Plutarch gives a brief quotation of Kratinos, who wrote drama from the 440s onwards, in which Aspasia was described as Hera (no doubt to Pericles' Zeus)—and in the same breath as a mere concubine (παλλακή): behind this apparently incoherent assault the uniting idea seems to have been that Aspasia had got above her station.⁹³ That Kratinos may have been thinking of Hera's role as deceiver and manipulator of the god is suggested by two other comic comparisons reported by Plutarch in the same passage and involving Aspasia; she was allegedly described as Deianeira and as Omphale. Deianeira was famed for her destruction of her powerful husband, Herakles, but also (perhaps by the fifth century, as later) for making war against men, in spite of her sex.⁹⁴ Omphale was, like Aspasia, a woman of western Asia Minor. In the *Trachiniae* of Sophocles she is called a barbarian (a point which, in a comedy, might have given spice to mockery of the Greek Aspasia); Herakles, in Sophocles' play, has been reduced to chattel slavery, with Omphale as his owner.⁹⁵ There is indifferent direct evidence (and good indirect evidence; see below) that Pericles and Aspasia were close in 440.⁹⁶ Plutarch states that Pericles 'seems' (or 'is thought': δοκεῖ) to have been motivated by a desire to please Aspasia when he took action against Samos (thereby siding with Samos' enemy in 440, Miletos, Aspasia's home state).⁹⁷ Again, 'they accuse Pericles of having voted for the war against Samos chiefly for the Milesians' sake, on the request of Aspasia.'⁹⁸ In this sentence of Plutarch, 'they' are unspecified, although a few lines earlier in the *Pericles* the biographer had been discussing the treatment of Aspasia by comic poets.

Non-Plutarchan sources seem to confirm that dramatists at Athens took a lively interest in Omphale from the middle of the fifth century. A scholion on the Platonic *Menexenos* (235e) suggests that Aspasia was called 'Omphale' in the *Kheirones* of Kratinos or the *Philo* of Eupolis (or both; the text is unsound).⁹⁹ Two satyr plays were entitled *Omphale*. One was by Akhaïos and on our slight evidence is best put some time near mid-century.¹⁰⁰ The other satyric *Omphale* was by Ion of Khios; ancient comments on this play make clear that, unsurprisingly, Omphale's connection with Herakles was involved.¹⁰¹ One fragment reads:

βακκάρις δὲ καὶ μύρα
καὶ Σαρδιανὸν κόσμον εἰδέναι χρὸς
ἄμεινον ἢ τὸν Πέλοπος ἐν νήσῳ τρόπον¹⁰²

the scent of baccaris and perfume,
and it is better to know Sardis' adornment of the skin,
than the ways of Peloponnese.

Another fragment is as follows:

καὶ τὴν μέλαιναν στίμιν ὀμματογράφον¹⁰³
and the black kohl which paints the eye.

In neither case is it certain who is speaking. However, we may have here the earliest surviving instance of a theme popular in later centuries, with Greeks and

Romans alike: the use of women's dress by Herakles during his stay with Omphale.¹⁰⁴ Omphale's assuming in turn the lion-skin and club of Herakles is a feature of one later Greek account, that of Lucian, who further portrays Herakles as working wool.¹⁰⁵ Our first surviving description of Herakles as a *willing* captive of Omphale may be from Ephoros in the fourth century BC, but it has been suspected for some time that the theme goes back to Old Comedy;¹⁰⁶ did it begin as a joke against Pericles?

Ion of Khios, to judge by references to his prose work made by Plutarch, was an admirer of Kimon; he boasted of having met Kimon socially, praised his appearance and told two stories very much to Kimon's credit.¹⁰⁷ Ion also, according to Plutarch, made a hostile remark about the vulgarity and boastfulness of Pericles and explicitly contrasted Pericles' demeanour with the grace and agreeable manner of Kimon.¹⁰⁸ It might be appropriate, then, if Ion had used the story of Omphale to exploit the theme of Pericles (=Herakles) as effeminate and subordinate to a woman, at the opposite pole to Peloponnesian manhood (and thus to the Lakonizer Kimon). A newly edited fragment of an unknown author, containing part of a Greek mime inscribed on papyrus in the first century AD, begins with the words

‘*Ηρακλέα νικηφόρον Ὀμφάλης θῆλυν λάτριν. . .*’¹⁰⁹

the victorious Herakles as the female servant of Omphale...

The setting is not wholly clear, but is apparently outside a brothel; it is night (a torch is referred to), someone is being turned away with harsh language, and there are references to a person lacking the money necessary to procure love. What is the connection between Omphale and a brothel? A recent commentator on this fragment points out that Aspasia was represented in Aristophanes' *Acharnians* as a keeper of prostitutes;¹¹⁰ is the mime-fragment inspired by Attic comedy or satyric drama of Pericles' time?¹¹¹

There seems a chance that Pericles' link with Aspasia, the most conspicuous female intruder of the age, was meant to come to mind when Athens was likened to a 'pretentious woman'. It is uncertain when her relationship with Pericles became public knowledge. But one of the Athenian generals in 406, named by Xenophon as Pericles, was almost certainly her son by the well-known Pericles: the son who was, according to Plutarch, given Athenian citizenship through a special exemption from Pericles' own law on alien mothers.¹¹² This younger Pericles was also holder of the office of Hellenotamias in 410/9.¹¹³ He must therefore have been at least thirty; that is, conceived in 441 or earlier. Thucydides suggests in another connection that it was noteworthy for a man to become politically prominent in his early thirties. Alkibiades rose to early prominence (at thirty-two or a little more, according to modern calculation), through the reputation of his ancestors, states Thucydides.¹¹⁴ Pericles the younger could have attained the power of general very young for the same reason, in which case his birth might belong as late as 440. But a brief quotation from the *Demoi* of the comedian Eupolis, made by Plutarch and stated by him to refer to Pericles the younger, may suggest that 'the bastard' was slow to put himself forward as leader, from fear concerning 'the whore'—that is, fear concerning the reputation of Aspasia.¹¹⁵ It is likely that he was born rather earlier

than 441; nothing that we know makes it improbable that his parents were cohabiting in the mid-440s, which would make Aspasia eligible for hostile references from the party of Thoukydides son of Melesias. If the concept of pretentious woman was indeed used against Periclean policy in the 440s, and at a time when Aspasia was publicly linked with Pericles, that concept would inevitably and predictably have brought her to mind. Only a few years before, in 451/0, Pericles had championed what must have been a widespread popular movement to discriminate against non-Athenian mothers, by illegalizing the transmission of Athenian citizenship to their sons by Athenian fathers.¹¹⁶ His own subsequent domicile with a woman of Miletos would have been a matter of general talk, with the idea probably commonplace that Aspasia was aiming at a status which belonged only to women of Athenian citizen family—in short, that she was being over-ambitious, if not pretentious.

Did the idea of Periclean Athens as a deceitful woman, and of Pericles as effeminate, belong in reality only to comedy? Has Plutarch misrepresented mere theatrical imaginings as serious elements in political debate? It is possible. We think of the confusion which has often been suspected behind Plutarch's statement that Aspasia was (literally) prosecuted for impiety by the comic playwright Hermippos.¹¹⁷ Also, Plutarch gives a version of the origins of the Peloponnesian War in which Aristophanic fantasy concerning Megara is prominent. But the latter version is not firmly accepted by Plutarch as true; he makes an agnostic statement on the subject, acknowledging the relevant Aristophanic verses for what they are, and referring to those verses as something quoted in their own defence by Megarians (in the fifth century, or much later?).¹¹⁸ The distinction between the theatre and the assembly, in point of political importance, may be encouraged by the compartmentalization of modern scholarly practice, as between historians of politics and of literature, but for Greeks the matter was not clear cut.¹¹⁹ What comedians portrayed in the theatre was recognized by contemporaries as a serious political influence. It is made virtually certain by a famous passage in the *Acharnians* that Kleon, a man second to none in understanding how to influence the assembly in the mid-420s, thought it worthwhile then to threaten Aristophanes in respect of his comic output.¹²⁰ We also learn from scholia that restrictions were placed on comedy, as when Athens intervened in the war between Samos and Miletos.¹²¹ Quite what political effect was feared from comedy on that occasion is unclear, but there is obviously a fair chance that it involved the potential for serious mischief in the fact that Aspasia was from Miletos. Aspasia at the time was a sitting target for comedians, and for political speculation. Indeed, Aristophanes' far-fetched portrayal of Aspasia as responsible, from personal motives, for hostility towards Megara and thus for the outbreak of war with Sparta in 431, when there was no obvious connection (so far as we know) between Aspasia and Megara,¹²² may reflect memory of the earlier episode involving Miletos and Samos. An idea that Aspasia had lured Pericles into the earlier war, irresistible and memorable, would be worth rehashing even in the less promising circumstances of the Peloponnesian War. The discourse of the assembly and of the theatre was surely related in complex and reciprocal fashion.¹²³ The idea that Aspasia dominated eminent male politicians is found in unfrivolous, if somewhat ironic, prose of the fourth century; in the Platonic *Menexenos* Aspasia is said to have composed Pericles' Funeral Speech for him.¹²⁴

Aeschines the Socratic, according to Plutarch, suggested that Aspasia was responsible for the rise of the politician Lysikles, after Pericles' death.¹²⁵ But influential fascination with the idea of political women did not, as we have seen, begin with Aspasia. Kimon's sister, Elpinike, noted for her alleged sexual activity, and the subject of two undatable stories in Plutarch which allege that she twice confronted Pericles on political matters,¹²⁶ has left a political trace which is almost certainly from the fifth century. An ostrakon refers to her; the inscriber wrote that Kimon should 'get out, and take his sister with him'.¹²⁷ Here, at one of the most serious moments of decision in the Athenian democracy, resentful thoughts about a well-connected woman were at the forefront of one man's mind.

To conclude: Plutarch's account of contemporary controversy over the Parthenon fits in many non-obvious ways with evidence from other sources concerning policies and rhetoric of the day. There is also an interesting degree of coherence within the *Life of Pericles*. While we need to be wary of circular argument in this last respect, it is significant that the coherence may go further than Plutarch himself was aware. There is no apparent awareness, for example, that the idea of Aspasia as Omphale may relate to the image, ascribed to Thoukydides' party, of Pericles misusing wool; nor is it even certain that Plutarch saw how the word *σπαθῶντος*, with its suggestion of pretentiousness on the part of a woman, connected with the phrase *ἀλαζόναγυναῖκα*. We cannot prove that, in recording serious controversy about building, Plutarch has not constructed too much from ideas which, in reality, belonged mainly to the theatre. But elaborate and almost entirely erroneous construction by Plutarch (of debate which contains a sober and prosaic response from Pericles) would have few, if any, proven analogues from the *Lives*; on the other hand, the biographies contain innumerable episodes which can be shown to be largely correct. The modern suggestion that the building controversy was derived by Plutarch from a rhetorical school exercise of post-classical times seems mistaken.¹²⁸ There is just too much detail with special fitness to the mid-fifth century, too much that would appeal in an exact, concentrated way to prejudices of that period.

There seems little point in speculating at great length about which writer of the classical period is most likely to have been Plutarch's ultimate written source. Modern attempts at identification have proved contradictory and unpersuasive;¹²⁹ judicious critics have shown qualified agnosticism, as for example Stockton who wrote of a source which was 'certainly...good...and may be...contemporary'.¹³⁰ Stesimbrotos and Ion, contemporaries of the building programme, might each have found it appealing to record rancorous political and personal criticism containing references to femininity. In his biographies of fifth-century Athenians, Plutarch cites Stesimbrotos eleven times, Ion five times, on occasion vigorously rejecting the testimony of each,¹³¹ while at other times reporting it with no dissenting comment.¹³² (However good or bad Plutarch's judgement, it might be hard to sustain in this area the orthodoxy that he is only as good, or as bad, as his sources.) In their few surviving fragments, both writers report striking public utterances: Stesimbrotos has Kimon persistently informing the Athenians 'But this isn't how the Spartans behave' and Pericles comparing the war dead at Samos with the immortal gods.¹³³ Ion reports Kimon's claim that Sparta should be Athens' yoke-fellow.¹³⁴ Stesimbrotos wrote of a sexually charged confrontation of Pericles with Elpinike¹³⁵ and of an affair between Pericles and his

daughter-in-law;¹³⁶ Ion has a story of pederasty on the part of Sophocles, the poet and general.¹³⁷ Ion appears as a warm supporter of Kimon against Pericles.¹³⁸ Stesimbrotos is less certainly partisan, as between the two men; his references to Kimon's lakonism (or 'Peloponnesian spirit' as Stesimbrotos calls it) in temperament and policy may just reflect a more detached interest in differing ideals of manhood, which would have applied to the controversy, as reported, about the Parthenon.¹³⁹ If Stesimbrotos was not hostile, or not warmly hostile, towards Pericles, he might have included, in his work *On Kimon and Thoukydides and Pericles*, a version of Pericles' response towards the criticism of the building programme sober enough to have formed the basis of the Periclean defence we have in Plutarch. On the other hand, there are two points which may make Ion the likelier conduit for the claims about Pericles as an effeminate and Athens as a pretentious woman. In his satyric output he may well have shown great interest in the idea of Pericles as the cross-dressing chattel of Omphale, who symbolized the most conspicuously ambitious woman in Athens. In his prose work Ion may come close to the idea traced above, that there was something pretentious about the actions of Pericles himself. When criticizing Pericles' manner in company, Ion seemingly used the rare word *μοθωνικήν*.¹⁴⁰ Aristophanes, in separate plays, twice uses the cognate *μόθων* closely with terms involving *φενακ-* and *κοβαλο-*.¹⁴¹ The *φενακ-* words involve the idea of cheating; *κοβαλο-* is used by Aristotle of mimicry.¹⁴² It may well be, as scholiasts suggest, that the word *μόθων* was believed to be Spartan (cognate with *μόθαξ*?), the name for a non-Spartiate who had been brought up with Spartiates (and who might therefore be resented as pretending to the role of citizen).¹⁴³ In that case, Ion's criticism of Pericles would have, like his satyric lines about effeminacy and the Peloponnesian lifestyle, a laconizing flavour appropriate to Kimonian circles. However, before we use Occam's Razor confidently to exclude sources other than Ion, we should recall the evidence, Plutarchan and non-Plutarchan, that Athenians *en masse* at the theatre were expected to find enduringly funny the comparison of Aspasia with Omphale, and thus probably to understand the joke that Periclean policy was effeminate. That theme was evidently impressive, and would be known virtually to all.

If in reality we have good reason to take seriously Plutarch's account of rhetoric against and for the building programme, that would give support for the otherwise rather insecurely based traditional belief that Pericles was a chief mover of that programme. We might otherwise have asked whether the idea of a Periclean Parthenon was not the result of a vortex, albeit one at work by Isocrates' time (below, n.l), which had brought together Athens' most famous building with the city's most famous contemporary politician. Respectful analysis of Plutarch's account may also suggest a general principle: that for understanding even so masculine a topic as conflict over public policy between Athenian factions, it may be essential to reflect on homely subjects, such as cosmetics and weaving. If we are to make the most of political history, it may be quite important that social history is not itself marginalized as a somewhat feminine usurper.

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NOTES

(References to Plutarch are to the *Life of Pericles*, unless otherwise stated.)

- 1 Isoc. 15 234, cf. 7 66. Dem. 22 13, cf. 76. Inscriptions of the fifth century reveal something of the formal arrangements, and of the financial accounts, for the construction of the temple; they make clear that it began in 447/6: *IGI*³ 436–51. Some problematic remarks from a post-classical literary commentator have suggested that in 450/49 Athens prepared to use Delian League funds for the building; the ‘Anonymus Argentinensis’ is conveniently introduced at Meiggs (1972) 515–18.
- 2 II 13 3.
- 3 I 10 2.
- 4 II 38.
- 5 II 40 1–2, with Rusten (1985) 14–19.
- 6 Powell (1988) 155–7.
- 7 Andrewes (1978) 1.
- 8 Stadter (1989) 149. Ameling (1985) 47–63 argues similarly. Meiggs makes sensible remarks, but suspends judgement on the question whether Plutarch had ultimately a fifth-century source (1972:139–40). Demetrios of Phaleron, writing at the end of the fourth century and as no friend of democracy, appears to have disapproved of the expense involved in building the Propylaia; Cic. *de officiis* II 60. It is possible that the Propylaia served at times in argument as a proxy for the Parthenon, for those who wished to condemn the expenditure without appearing to criticize a temple.
- 9 Stadter (1989) 102f.; cf. Gomme (1945–) I 79f.
- 10 E.g. Powell (1988) 26f. The much-cited case of supposedly invented detail in the *Life of Coriolanus* is not proven, since it is possible, if unlikely, that Plutarch derived the detail in question from a source now lost; Russell (1963) 23f., 27f.
- 11 A near-total solar eclipse did occur in August 431 (Thuc. II 28); Plutarch’s story, which he describes (cautiously?) as one told in philosophy classes (35 1f.), is set in 430; cf. Stadter (1989) 320. If the philosophers were Plutarch’s only source here, they may well have told the moral tale without regard for exact historical context.
- 12 II 5f.
- 13 II 40 2, cf. 63 2 and below p. 254.
- 14 Meiggs (1972) 121–3, 159–60.
- 15 II 1, 8 5.
- 16 Wade-Gery (1932) 208–11.
- 17 Perhaps, as a student of Plato, Plutarch remembered the reference to Thoukydides and wrestling at *Meno* 94c.
- 18 II 1.
- 19 II 4. This recalls 9.2 and the remark in the *Ath. Pol.* (27 3) to the effect that Pericles’ introduction of pay for jurors was done as ‘counterdemagogy to match the largesse of Kimon’; see Rhodes (1981) 338–40.
- 20 Andrewes (1978) 1. Thuc. I 19, 116 2, 117 2; III 10 5; VI 85 2; VII 20 2 (Khios and Lesbos). Compare *Ath. Pol.* 24 2.
- 21 Thuc. I 73 4; cf. Hdt. VI 108, 111, 113; Thomas (1989) 221.
- 22 Thuc. III 54 3; Gomme (1945–) *ad loc.* Cf. Hdt. VII 132, 202, VIII 50, Paus. IX 32 4.

- 23 The moral realities were complex; some states now contributing in cash had for a time contributed in the form of ships and men (Thuc. I 99 with Gomme (1945–) *ad loc.*), and even states which had always contributed ships and men might claim a share in the surplus funds. Such awkward complications might be finessed by any competent orator.
- 24 Andrewes (1978) 4f. Elsewhere, Andrewes himself notes that Phrynikhos in the present passage refers to the conservative gentry as the ὀνομαζομένους ('so called') καλοὺς καγαθοὺς and observes that the ὀνομαζομένους must imply scepticism, since the label was well known (1970–: V 110, 113).
- 25 E.g. Thuc. III 82 8, VIII 64 5.
- 26 VIII 64 5, cf. 24 4. Cf. North (1966) 100ff.
- 27 [Xen.] *Atb.Pol.* 1.14.
- 28 Andrewes (1978) 1; for Thoukydides' war record, Plato *Lakbes* 179c, Plut. *Life of Demosthenes* 13 6.
- 29 Powell (1988) 26f.
- 30 Stadter (1989) 147, 152, cf. 144.
- 31 Davies (1971) 459.
- 32 Meritt (1945) 91–3, Mattingly (1961) 164, Meritt and Wade-Gery (1963) 105f., Davies (1971) 457.
- 33 II 13 1.
- 34 'vain' in Burn (1966) 229 and Scott-Kilvert (1960); 'wanton' in Perrin (1916) 37 and Meiggs (1972) 132.
- 35 *NE*, esp. 1127 a–b; *Characters* 23.
- 36 Stadter (1989) 152.
- 37 *Oikonomikos* 10 2 (cosmetics); 6 12, 16–17; 7 5; 10 1; 11 1 (virtue and high status). The woman's name was seemingly Khrysilla. Since her later life was represented elsewhere as the opposite of virtuous (cf. Davies 1971:264–8), it is just possible that Xenophon here is being ironic; he may even have conceived her as falsely pretentious in the matter of virtue.
- 38 Brommer (1979) 17f.
- 39 Stadter (1989) 152.
- 40 Hdt. VII 140. Cf. the comic reference to Pericles wearing the Odeion on his head; Plut. *Pericles* 13 6.
- 41 *Oikonomikos* 10 3–12.
- 42 For references to whiteness of skin as a desired quality in Homeric female aristocrats and Athenian bourgeois housewives, see Powell (1988) 360f.
- 43 Ovid, *Ars Amatoria* III 303–5.
- 44 *Menex.* 235a.
- 45 *Rep.* 495c–e.
- 46 For the date of the revised version of this play, Sommerstein (1982) 2.
- 47 The author has heard the phrase applied figuratively to the Nottingham suburb of West Bridgford, a district long known for its imposing houses and impoverished residents.
- 48 Philyllios 12, Diphilos 43 27.
- 49 Davies (1971) 18. Compare Alkibiades' own observation in this speech that men are willing to lie in their eagerness to claim a relationship with a grandee of an earlier age: VI 16 5.
- 50 Thuc.VI 16 1–3, cf. Isoc. XV 234.
- 51 Gomme (1951) 78f, de Romilly (1963) 210, Dover (1970–) IV 246, 254f. ('Periklean reminiscences, both verbal and substantial, are conspicuous...').

- 52 I 144 4.
53 VI 18 6.
54 II 40 5.
55 VI 18 2.
56 II 63 2.
57 VI 18 3. Compare the use of ὥσπερ καὶ ἄλλο τι at 1.142.9 (Pericles) and VI 18 Gomme (1951) 78f., comparing Thuc. II 60 5 (Pericles) with the opening sections of (Alkibiades).
58 Gomme (1951) 78f., comparing Thuc. II 60 5 (Pericles) with the opening sections of Alkibiades' speech (VI 16).
59 Thuc. II 40 2, 63 2f., 64 4 (Pericles); VI 18 6f. (Alkibiades). It was almost certainly the Spartan contention that the two forms of Athenian πολυπραγμοσύνη were of a piece; that the lack of self-discipline which led ordinary Athenians into active domestic politics was the same as led their state into empire-building; this would have suggested the conclusion, most convenient for Sparta, that *demokratia* was inherently menacing and unstable. The pre-existence of loaded terms, ἄπολυ – πραγμ –, under which the two concepts could be combined, made it important and difficult for propagandists of *demokratia* to disentangle and rebut the oligarchic case; whence, no doubt, the efforts of Pericles and Alkibiades. The Athenian envoy Euphemos demonstrates the power of the concept ἀπραγμοσύνη when he tries to finesse it, rather than challenge it; he argues that Athenian πολυπραγμοσύνη makes it possible for others to live safely with their own ἀπραγμοσύνη (Thuc. VI 87 3f.; cf. I 32 5, I 70 8, IV 61 7).
60 Gomme (1951) 78f.
61 Thuc. II 64 5 (Pericles); VI 16 5 (Alkibiades).
62 For its precariousness, Thuc. I 112 5.
63 Thuc. II 64 6.
64 Thuc. I 140 5.
65 Thuc. I 143 5.
66 See e.g. Hdt. III 46, Thuc. I 86 1 with Powell (1988) 235.
67 The emphasis on 'words' and 'see' is imparted by the Greek word order; the words come respectively at the beginning and the end of the phrase attributed to Themistokles; Thuc. I 91 2.
68 Thuc. I 144 2, 145.
69 Thuc. I 127 1–128 2.
70 Thuc. II 31, IV 66 1.
71 Thuc. I 142 4.
72 I 112 5.
73 21. Plutarch probably saw the wolf himself; it was apparently to be seen later, in Pausanias' day: Paus. X 14 7.
74 Thuc. II 41 1; I 145.
75 Thuc. I 144 1, II 13 9, 62 1, 65 7; Brunt (1965) 259; de Ste. Croix (1972) 208.
76 I 23 6.
77 On the Odeion, Stadter (1989) 172–3. Building of the Propylaia began in 437/6 (Philokhoros *ap.* Harpokration s.vv. Προπύλαια ταῦτα); how far ahead it was planned cannot, perhaps, be determined.
78 II 13 5; *FGH* 328 F 121=schol. Ar. *Peace* 605.
79 Donnay (1967) 50–86; Eddy (1977) 107–11 and refs. there.
80 Gomme (1945–) I 273f.

- 81 Stanier (1953) 68–76, esp. 73, estimates a cost of 469 talents for the Parthenon (though cf. Meiggs-Lewis (1969) 165). On the total cost of constructing the golden statue, Dinsmoor (1937) 507–11.
- 82 The gold may never have been removed, even in the darkest days of the Peloponnesian War or its impoverished aftermath; Gomme (1945–) II 25f.
- 83 Thuc. II 13 2.
- 84 *OED*² s.v. *jingo*.
- 85 Andrewes (1978) 1; Thuc. I 113.
- 86 Cf. Stadter (1989) xl, xli.
- 87 Plut. *Kimon* 13 5–7, cf. *Atb. Pol.* 27 3; Judeich (1931) 73f., Meiggs (1963) 43f.
- 88 33 7f., with the passage of the comedian Hermippos quoted there.
- 89 Plut. *Kimon* 4 6, 8f. (Kimon); *Pericles* 13 15f. (Pericles).
- 90 (1896) col. 1719.
- 91 Stadter (1989) 234 found the only study worth citing as a good general introduction to the subject of Aspasia to be Judeich's work in *RE* (of 1896). Many, such as Pomeroy (1975:89), have thought Aspasia a *hetaira* (though cf. Wilamowitz 1893:2.99). But that she attached herself to many men, or to any on a commercial basis, is not established. Terms such as 'prostitute' (πόρνη) or 'concubine' (παλλακή) used in comedy (Kratinos and Eupolis *ap.* Plut. *Pericles* 24 9f.) are no more reliable than the implication in the same context that she engaged in anal sex. If she ever had been seriously thought to have been sexually promiscuous, before or during her time with Pericles, that might have made it impossible for her son, even by Pericles, to be admitted by special decree to citizenship (see below, p. 260). That she seems, on the friendly evidence of Xenophon, to have acted as matchmaker for purposes of marriage (*Mem.* II 6 36, *Oikon.* III 14) need not mean (*pace* Stadter 1989:236) that she was involved in pandering. But even if she was, such legal but morally marginal work might well have been recognized as a proper activity for resident foreigners. It has been suggested recently that the very mention of Aspasia in comedy is evidence that her sexual history had lost her the protection of anonymity in the world of men, the anonymity normally given to free women in Athens—except (it is admitted) to blameless eminences, such as priestesses, and to the female relatives of enemies in court (Stadter 1989:236; cf. Schaps 1977:323–30). But how can we tell in this case? A non-citizen woman, informally attached to a man so powerful as to be an enduring inspiration to comedians and political enemies alike, probably believed to have political interests of her own, to have (non-sexual) contacts with men of her own choosing, and to be involved somehow in liaising between men and women, Aspasia was a rarity; our generalizations about anonymity are not based on cases like hers. Rather, a relevant principle may be that conspicuous rarities in high places attract comment.
- 92 ll. 526ff.
- 93 24 9. For a similar combination of logically extreme terms, to mean merely that a woman of intermediate status is pretending to a higher, but still intermediate, status, cf. the English 'Lady Muck'. On Kratinos in the 440s: Plut. *Kimon* 10 4, *Pericles* 13 7f., 10.
- 94 March (1987) 49–77.
- 95 ll. 70, 248–54.
- 96 Plut. *Pericles* 24 2; 25 1, quite likely following the unreliable Douris of Samos; *FGH* 76 F 65 and Stadter (1989) on 24 2.

- 97 24 2.
 98 25 1.
 99 Stadter (1989) 234.
 100 Suda s.v. Ἀχαιός (4683); Snell (1971) 20 F 32–5 (in aggregate slightly less than eight lines).
 101 Snell (1971) 19 F 17a (=POxy 13, 1611 fr.2, col. 1, 121–7); F 29 (=Athen. 411b); F 30 (=Poll. 2 95, Tzetz. *Khil.* 3 957).
 102 Athen. 690b (=Snell 1971:19 F 24).
 103 Poll. 5 101 (=Snell 1971:19 F 25).
 104 For references, Herzog-Hauser (1939) cols 390f.
 105 Lucian, *How to Write History* 10; Propertius IV 9 47–50. For the theme in iconography, refs at Herzog-Hauser (1939) cols 394f.
 106 *ap.* schol. Apoll. Rhod. I 1289 (=FGH 70 F 14b); Herzog-Hauser (1939) col. 390.
 107 *Kimón* 5 3, 9.
 108 5 3.
 109 POxy 53, 3700.
 110 Jarcho (1987) 32–4.
 111 Haslam (1986); Jarcho (1987).
 112 Xen. *Hell.* I 5 16, 6 29, 7 2, 7 16, 7 21; Plut. *Pericles* 37 5f., cf. 24 9f.
 113 Meiggs and Lewis (1969) no. 84, ll. 8, 11, 13, 18.
 114 V 43 2, VI 12 2, with Gomme, Andrewes and Dover (1970–) *ad loc.*
 115 24 10, cf. Austin (1973) F 95 ll.166–8 (ancient commentary on Eupolis *Marikas*). On the date of Eupolis’ *Demoi* (416?; in any case after the battle of Mantinea [418]), Storey (1990) 24–7. For an argument that the younger Pericles was born by 446, Stadter (1989) 340.
 116 *Atb. Pol.* 26 4, with Rhodes (1981) *ad loc.*
 117 32 1 (with Stadter 297 for bibliography), de Ste. Croix (1972) 235f.
 118 31 1; 30 4.
 119 de Ste. Croix (1972) 235f.
 120 ll. 377–82 (with Sommerstein 1980:2ff.), cf. *Wasps* 1284ff. (with Sommerstein (1983) *ad loc.*); Halliwell (1991).
 121 Scholia to Ar. *Ach.* 67 and to *Birds* 1297; Sommerstein (1986) 101–8.
 122 Herakleides of Pontus (*ap.* Athen. 533c–d) says that Aspasia came from Megara. Davies writes (1971:458): ‘Herakleides’ statement...is no more than a (wilful?) misunderstanding of the canard concerning the outbreak of war in 432/1 (Ar. *Ach.* 524ff.: here as elsewhere Herakleides’ statement merely illuminates his own unreliability and historical irresponsibility).’
 123 The idea in 1960s Britain that the Conservative leader Edward Heath had the personality of a grocer was made popular by satire in the magazine *Private Eye*; it eventually caused mirth in the House of Commons. The similarly enduring claim that a later leader, John Major, was characterless, a ‘grey man’, seems to have moved in the opposite direction, beginning among enemies in Parliament, to be taken up by the television satire *Spitting Image*, which memorably employed a grey-faced puppet with Major’s features (which no doubt in turn influenced Parliament). Major’s political demise was later predicted by an influential tabloid newspaper with the headline ‘One foot in the greyve’—a simultaneous reference to two different contemporary television comedies: *Observer* (London), 13 June 1993, p. 19.
 124 236b.
 125 24 6; cf. *Menex.* 235e.

- 126 *Kimon* 14 5, *Pericles* 10 6 and 28 5–7.
- 127 Mattingly (1971) 284.
- 128 Andrewes (1978) 4.
- 129 For bibliography, Ameling (1985) 48.
- 130 Stockton (1959) 69.
- 131 *Them.* 2 3, 24 5–25 1; *Pericles* 13 15f., 26 1 (Stesimbrotos); 5 3 (Ion).
- 132 *Them.* 4 4; *Kimon* 4 5, 14 5, 16 1, 16 3 (Stesimbrotos); 5 3; 9; 16 10; *Pericles* 28 7 (Ion).
- 133 *Kimon* 16 3; *Pericles* 8 9.
- 134 *Kimon* 16 10; cf. a reported private utterance of Pericles concerning Agamemnon: *Pericles* 28 7.
- 135 *Kimon* 14 5.
- 136 13 16; 36 6: the ultimate source is given as Pericles' estranged son, Xanthippos.
- 137 Athen. 603e–604d.
- 138 *Pericles* 5 3; cf. *Kimon* 5 3; 9.
- 139 *Kimon* 4 5, 16 3. On 16 1 see Davies (1971) 304, for a possible insulting reference to Kimon's wife Isodike by Stesimbrotos.
- 140 Plut. *Pericles* 5 3.
- 141 *Knights* 632–5, cf. 696f.; *Wealth* 279f.
- 142 *HA* 597b.
- 143 Schol. to Ar.*Knights* 634 and *Wealth* 279.

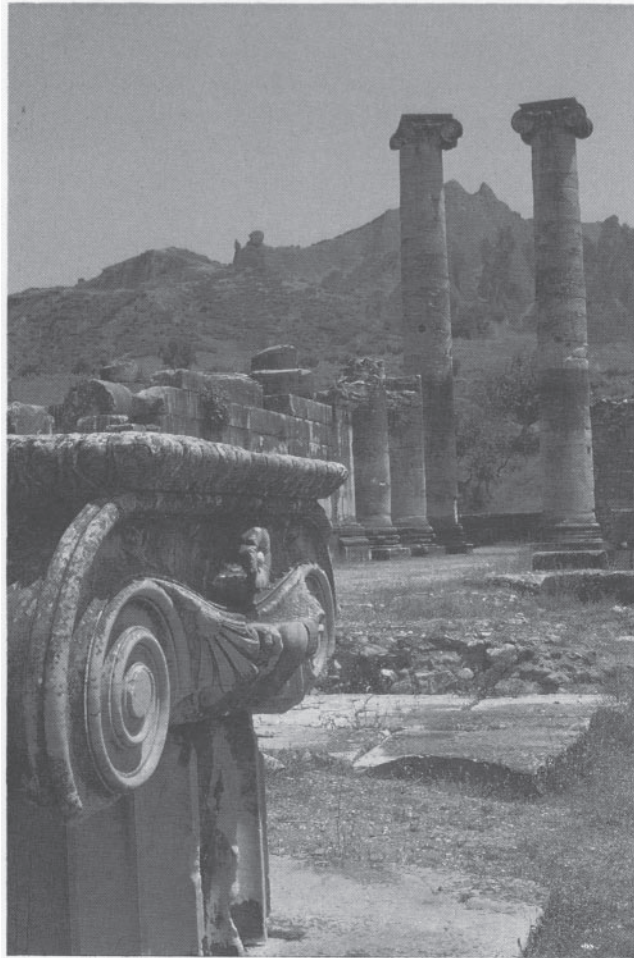
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PART II

GREEKS (AND NON-GREEKS)
AT THE MARGINS



HERODOTUS ON EGYPTIAN
BUILDINGS*

A test case

*Alan B. Lloyd*

The elusive nature of Herodotus' historico-literary persona has generated increasingly vigorous debate in recent years. The difficulty lies ultimately in his liminal position in the evolution of Greek narrative literature. At one level he is the heir to a long oral tradition which is preserved only in a partial, distorted and somewhat intangible form in written material. On the other hand, his conceptual world is deeply imbued with the philosophical and scientific work of the fifth and sixth centuries BC. The ambiguities inherent in this situation not infrequently make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to define the precise nature of statements in his work. To what extent are they logographic embellishment? To what degree do they demand the credence of scientific statement? Faced with such dilemmas, it must be incumbent upon us to examine with great care the relatively few elements in Herodotus' *History* where external controls can be applied and where, in consequence, unequivocal progress can be made in defining the parameters within which he operated. Since his accounts of Egyptian buildings are an obvious case in point, I propose in this chapter to submit those accounts to a detailed analysis in an attempt to establish the underlying principles which appear to operate in determining both what is discussed and the manner in which the discussion is conducted.

Herodotus' *Αἰγύπτιος λόγος* falls into two main sections: II.1–98, which is preeminently concerned with matters geographical and ethnographic, and II.99–III.1–15, which is devoted to history. When considering Herodotus' discussions of Egyptian buildings,¹ it quickly becomes clear that, with one exception, they all appear in the second or historical section, and that even the exception, the temple of Khemmis at II.91, is described in relation to a figure of Greek legend/history. Furthermore, the quickest of surveys will reveal that the monuments described cluster in the northern part of the country in an area stretching from the Fayûm to the Mediterranean coast.

The descriptions fall into three categories: (1) buildings which survive in a good state of preservation; (2) buildings which survive in a badly ruined condition; (3) buildings which have not survived at all. These groups break down, in turn, into two obvious sub-categories: (a) those stated to have been seen by Herodotus; (b) those which are simply described, i.e. there is no indication of autopsy. In the case of group (a) it cannot be assumed that all the information is derived from autopsy; in a specific case a claim of autopsy need never mean more than that Herodotus, at some

stage, saw the monument. The information purveyed may still, in varying degrees, derive from second- or third-hand sources. Caution is similarly required in the case of group (b); for the absence of a claim to autopsy cannot be taken to mean that there was none. As for other sources, II.99.1 states: ‘from now on I am going to recount Egyptian traditions as I heard them, but this will be supplemented by my own observation.’ On this comment it needs to be noted that by ‘Egyptian traditions’ he generally means the people whom he calls priests, and under the term ‘observation’ he includes *gnome*, i.e. rational assessment of evidence. It is clear, however, that, once he gets down to the reign of Psammetikhos, non-Egyptian, i.e. Greek, sources come into play as well.²

CATEGORY 1. BUILDINGS WELL PRESERVED

It is self-evident that these descriptions are the most controllable and, *ipso facto*, revealing of all. The results of their study must, therefore, have a fundamental effect on the evaluation of the other two groups. The group amounts to: i. The Great Pyramid of Giza (II.124–6); ii. A subsidiary pyramid adjoining the Great Pyramid (II.126); iii. The Second Pyramid (II.127–8); iv. The Third Pyramid (II.134); v. The pyramid at Hawara (II.148.7); vi. The temple of Zeus (**Amon-rē**) at Thebes. It should also be noted that, in addition to the discussion at II.124ff., the pyramids are also the subject of significant comment at II.148.3, where they are described as **λόγου μέζονες καὶ πολλῶν ἐκάστη αὐτέων Ἑλληνικῶν ἔργων καὶ μεγάλων ἀνταξίη**, ‘surpassing all power to describe and each one of them equal to many great works of the Greeks’.³

In all cases in this category an *element* of autopsy is involved: Herodotus indicates that he himself visited the Great Pyramid (II.125.6), and he speaks of personally measuring the Second (II.127.1), but it should be borne firmly in mind that it would be absolutely impossible for anyone in such a position not to have seen all the pyramids and a substantial part of the Giza necropolis besides. Autopsy is equally indisputable in the case of Hawara (II.148) and the Theban temple (II.143). Other stated sources for this category include Egyptian priestly informants (II.99 etc.), an interpreter (**ἑρμηνεύς**, II.125.6), Herodotus’ personal assessment of evidence (**ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκέειν**, II.124.3) and unspecified Greeks (**μετεξέτεροι Ἑλλήνων**, II.134.1).

i. The Great Pyramid

The account of this monument is much the longest of the entire group. Herodotus comments on the following aspects of the monument: the builder, the position, the method of constructing three elements (the causeway, the subterranean chambers and the pyramid proper), the time taken to construct two units (the causeway+subterranean chambers and the pyramid proper), certain features of the architecture (the dimensions of the pyramid and the causeway, the appearance of the stone surfaces of the causeway and pyramid, the structure of the pyramid) and the function of both the causeway and the pyramid. These comments clearly break down into three groups: (a) traditional material on the building’s relationship to a historical figure and on the building methods employed; (b) comments on architectural

features, which can be divided into two further categories: 1. Description of external features; 2. Description of internal elements; (c) explanation of architectural features.

(a) *Traditional material*

The builder is stated to be Cheops, a perfectly good classical Greek rendering of Khufu, the name of the Fourth Dynasty king which is itself a shortening of the name *Hnm-hw.f wī*. This attribution is known from epigraphic evidence to be correct. Herodotus also records an alternative Egyptian tradition that the pyramid was the work of a certain Philitis; this claim, however, is clearly folklore, and he rightly regards it as spurious (II.128).

When dealing with building methods,⁴ Herodotus turns his attention to three architectural elements: the causeway, what he calls the subterranean chambers and the pyramid's superstructure (see fig. 12.1). There is no mention of the mortuary temple or the valley temple, but these, if they were still visible, he may have regarded, quite reasonably, as part of the causeway. When he deals with the work-force, he asserts that it comprised the entire population of Egypt, and he subsequently describes an inscription, which purports to itemize the expenditure on vegetables for the workmen. This account will certainly not do as it stands: the *corvée* system was indeed a standard way of obtaining the labour required for public services throughout Pharaonic times, but we can be confident that the adjective *πάντας*, 'all', embodies a substantial element of exaggeration. As for the 'inscription', 'radishes, onions, and garlic' were certainly standard elements in Egyptian diet, but any wages bill would have to include staples such as bread and beer. It should also be noted that in detailing the expenditure on vegetables for the workmen he anachronistically speaks in terms of a money economy which was unknown to the Egyptians until the Late Period and not widely current in their country until Graeco-Roman times. Such anomalies strongly suggest that, while we need not deny that there was an inscription of some sort, it did not contain the information alleged by the 'interpreter'. Indeed there is a very good chance that it was considerably later than the time of Khufu.

The comments made by Herodotus on the source of the building stone and the methods of transporting it are most interesting. He claims that the stone came from the east side of the river; this is indeed true of the casing blocks, which are known to have emanated from the Moqattam Hills east of modern Cairo, but most of the building stone was locally quarried limestone. One group of workers, he says, transported the blocks to the river and brought them across (whether they also quarried them is not stated, though II.125.7 *may* mean that they were thought to have done). Another group then dragged them across the alluvium to the building site on the western cliffs. Herodotus seems to ignore the potential for using the inundation, but he does mention the two standard methods of moving objects, i.e. water transport and dragging. He then informs us that the labour force worked continually in relays of 100,000 men, each relay for a period of three months. Here there is probably a misunderstanding: he is correct in mentioning the figure of three months since this was the standard shift in ancient Egypt. If, however, the figure of 100,000 is

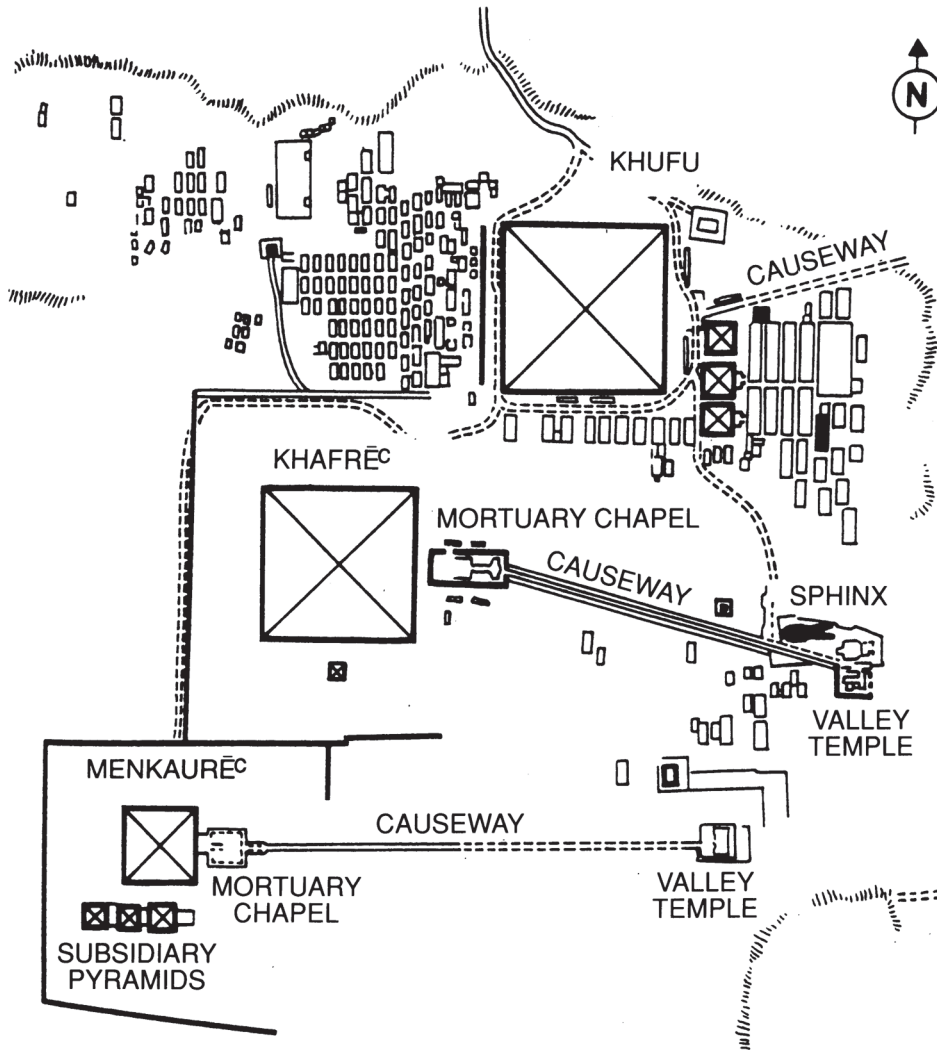


Figure 12.1 The Giza necropolis showing the structure of the pyramid complexes of Khufu, Khafre^c and Menkaure^c.

correct—and it is not impossible—it probably refers to the *maximum* force used in the course of the year, i.e. the force employed during the inundation season to stockpile blocks at the pyramid site. Those would then be dealt with by a smaller permanent force on site. We are further informed that, before starting on the pyramid proper, they constructed a causeway (ὁδός) on which they dragged the stones needed for the pyramid. Here, however, confusion has clearly arisen because Herodotus or his source has wrongly identified as a building ramp the causeway joining the valley temple to the pyramid—a feature which performed a totally different function.⁵ Finally, it should be noted that it is incorrectly inferred that the workmen availed themselves of tools of iron, whereas this metal was not used commonly in Egypt

until the Ptolemaic and Roman periods. This error must have been Greek, but whether it was introduced by Herodotus himself cannot be established.

On all this we should issue one final *caveat*. Because the description of the deployment of the work-force contains elements which are certainly true of the Fourth Dynasty, commentators have often assumed that we are dealing with a tradition going back in some degree *c.* 2,000 years. This is not, of course, absolutely inconceivable, but it should be borne firmly in mind that work practices changed little, if at all, in the course of Pharaonic history, and what we see before us in Herodotus may be largely inference, i.e. he may have an Egyptian source or sources basically operating on the principle: 'This is how we have always dealt with such problems and that must be the way it was done by Cheops.'

The pyramid proper is stated to have been built in two phases: first, it was constructed as a step pyramid; then the steps were filled in to give a flat surface. This is evidently correct, though here again it must remain an open question whether the claim is old tradition handed down over many generations or simply a recent inference from an unfinished pyramid in the area.⁶ The account of the methods of carrying out the operation is distinctly more suspect. Herodotus claims that the Egyptians used cranes made (*μηχαναί*) of short bits of wood, and that the top step was finished first. He also states that there were two different traditions on exactly how the devices were used. The cranes are certainly unhistorical and the result of Greek inference based on the simple fact that from at least the sixth century cranes would have been used in Greece. The reference to short bits of wood also probably reflects Greek inference which, in this case, would be based on observations of Egyptian wood-working practice.⁷ Be all this as it may, the claims here are totally unhistorical. Ramps were the standard method of raising stones in Egyptian building and were certainly still in use over a century after the death of Herodotus since part of a fourth-century ramp system survives on the inside face of the south side of the outer pylon at Karnak.⁸ Interestingly enough, Diodorus Siculus gets it right four centuries after Herodotus when he states the building 'was carried out with mounds because cranes had not been invented at that time' (*διὰ χωμάτων γενέσθαι μήπω τῶν μηχανῶν εὐρημένων κατ'ἐκείνους τοὺς χρόνους*, I.63.6). In such a system the top part would certainly need to be completed first, a process which would have involved smoothing off the rough surface of the casing-blocks and polishing them. In the case of the Third Pyramid this is confirmed by the fact that the limestone blocks of the upper two thirds are planed off, whilst those in the lower third are not.

As for the time expended, Herodotus states that the causeway, the 'subterranean' chambers and the canal which fed them, took ten years to build. These statements involve a false conception of the building's internal structure, but, if we take the figure to refer to the causeway together with the one genuinely subterranean chamber, ten years would be more than ample by Egyptian standards. Nevertheless, since the figure is exactly half that for the pyramid, it might be wise to treat it with greater circumspection and doubt its historicity altogether. The pyramid itself is alleged to have taken twenty years to build. On the basis of inscriptional evidence from the monument itself this figure is entirely acceptable, e.g. a text on a block above the King's Chamber indicates that four-fifths of the pyramid was constructed by Regnal Year 17 of Khufu.

(b)1. Description of external features

The dimensions of the causeway are stated to be 5 stades long, 10 *orguiai* broad and 8 *orguiai* at its maximum height. This structure is now largely destroyed, but we know that it ran from Nazlet es-Semman westwards to the pyramid. Its length was c. 659 m as against Herodotus' 5 stades=somewhere between c. 891 m and 1065 m, i.e. Herodotus' figure is far too long.⁹ The actual width was c. 18.35 m as against Herodotus' figure which lies between c. 17.80 m and 21.30 m. The height cannot be checked. One's immediate reaction to this comparison is that at least the dimension most easily checked by a visitor is given a figure compatible with the truth.

The pyramid is stated to be 8 *plethra* square and 8 *plethra* high. This measurement must be at least 237.6 m and at most 284 m. The actual length of side is c. 230 m, i.e. within reach of the Herodotean figure. The figure for the height is much too great since the vertical height is c. 147 m and the oblique distance up the side c. 186.5 m; the latter, of course, is unlikely to be relevant for comparative purposes. Again, the figure for the aspect most easily measured by a visitor is not far wide of the mark. Each of the stones is said to be not less than 30 Greek feet. Even if we regard this figure as referring to length rather than height, it is too high, taken literally, but this should not disturb us unduly since 3 and its multiples could clearly be regarded as symbolic numbers by Herodotus and his audience.¹⁰ The statement simply means: 'In terms of feet they were, for stone blocks, pretty big.'

Herodotus also makes comments about the surface appearance of the causeway and pyramid. The causeway is said to be of polished(λίθου ξεστοῦ) stone and to be covered with relief sculptures (ζώων ἐγγεγλυμμένων). That it was made of limestone is certain, but we cannot determine whether the walls were embellished with reliefs.¹¹ As for the pyramid, the casing is stated to have been made of large polished stone blocks which are fitted together very precisely. They have almost completely disappeared, but those surviving, at the base as well as those preserved on the Second Pyramid, amply confirm the polish and show at least that they were large even if we cannot accept literally Herodotus' measurement. The extreme accuracy of the masonry is confirmed for the inner blocks by the survey of Petrie.¹²

(b)2. Description of internal features

According to Herodotus the internal structure of the pyramid consisted of subterranean chambers which are 'in' (?v) an island created by water brought into the pyramid from the Nile through a canal. Strictly only one chamber is subterranean, the others being built into the body of the pyramid proper, and they are certainly not arranged as Herodotus described (see fig. 12.2). However, his description does have a basis in Egyptian practice to the extent that it is clearly evolved at some stage from the concept of the Osiris grave, the best example of which is to be found in the cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos.¹³ The idea may also have been encouraged by an awareness that the internal chambers of pyramids can get penetrated by subsoil water, though we should be a little wary of this explanation since I know of no evidence that this phenomenon occurred as early as the fifth century. At all events, this description, erroneous though it may be, must have been Egyptian in origin.

of building methods, presumably because what has been said of the Great Pyramid in this respect is supposed to be valid for all. We are also told nothing of internal structure. This may be because nothing was known of it, but it might simply arise because it was not germane to his purpose, i.e. to throw more light on the building of the Great Pyramid and the iniquities of Cheops. The information falls into two categories: (a) traditional material; (b) comments on matters of observation.

(a) Traditional material

The builder is said to be a daughter of Cheops, a point illustrating the fact that the discussion of the Great Pyramid largely defines what is said of the other Giza pyramids, determining what is discussed and how. The attribution cannot be positively disproved in the present state of our knowledge. Only the southernmost of the three pyramids has been certainly ascribed, and it is known to have belonged to Henutsen, one of Cheops' wives; the northernmost probably belonged to a chief wife who may have been Meritites. Since, on the basis of standard practice, we should expect them all to have been built for queens, we should regard Herodotus' attribution with extreme scepticism. It should, however, be noted that the tale does at least show an awareness that subsidiary pyramids were constructed for women. Our sceptical attitude on this point is greatly strengthened by the salacious story which accompanies the attribution; for this tale can have little historical validity, not least because it looks suspiciously like an example of the common folk-motif of the woman who sells her favours for a particular purpose. It probably takes this specific form under the influence of the anti-Cheops tradition. It is likely, though not demonstrable, that the story has an Egyptian origin, but there is at least some Greek input in the form of the mention of money (, ἀργύριον ὀνόσον δὴ τι 'a certain sum of money').

(b) Matters of observation

The building is stated to lie in the middle of a group of three in front of the Great Pyramid. In general, this description is unproblematical since there are three ruined subsidiary pyramids on the south-east side of the pyramid facing the valley. As for dimensions, we are told that each side measures $1\frac{1}{2}$ *plethra*, i.e. between 44.5 m and 53.25 m. Since the actual measurement is 49.5 m sq., this observation is clearly in good order. There is no claim of autopsy or of having measured anything in person, but this situation may simply reflect a strategy whereby such claims are regarded as unnecessary, if statements are unexceptionable.

iii. The Second Pyramid of Giza

In this case we are explicitly told that autopsy was involved (II.127.1). Herodotus discusses five aspects: the builder, the dimensions, the internal structure, the building materials and the position. These observations break down into two categories: (a) traditional material; (b) matters of observation, though not necessarily observed by Herodotus or any contemporary.

(a) Traditional material

The builder is stated to be Khephren, a perfectly good Greek rendering of the Egyptian prototype *H'f-r'*. He is, however, erroneously stated to be Cheops' brother; he was, in reality, his son. The Egyptian alternative attribution to Philitis is rightly rejected (II.128).

(b) Matters of observation

The entire account is dominated by a desire to emphasize areas where the building was inferior to its predecessor, and it is evident that this point of emphasis exercises a major effect on what is discussed. The monument is said to stand next to the Great Pyramid on the same hill (*λόφος*), which is stated to be roughly 100 Greek feet high. There is nothing seriously exceptionable in this comment, though the figure for the height must be taken as a rough approximation only.

The dimensions of the pyramid are stated to be inferior to those of the Great Pyramid, and Herodotus claims to have measured them himself. In particular, he asserted that it is inferior in height (*μέγαθος*) by 40 Greek feet. This is certainly erroneous but is explicable since the base measurement, which Herodotus presumably thought here, as in the previous case, equalled the height, fell short of that of the Great Pyramid by about 48 ft (c. 14.6 m).

On external appearance he comments that the first course of stonework is of variegated Aswan granite (*λίθου Αἰθιοπικοῦ ποικίλου*). In reality it is the first two courses which are made of granite, usually red, but occasional blocks consist of black granite. The error on the number of courses could well reflect the presence of windblown sand around the base.

The comments on internal structure (*οὔτε γὰρ ὑπεστι οἰκήματα . . . Χέοπα*) are not well integrated with what precedes, but this should not perturb us unduly; we are simply confronted with an ellipse of thought in that Herodotus slips inadvertently, but quite naturally, from thinking about inferiority in terms of dimensions to inferiority in other respects.¹⁴ The interior is described entirely in negative terms. Herodotus simply states that it did not have the subterranean features of the Great Pyramid. Insofar as the Second Pyramid *is* different, this is a sound observation, but it should be remembered that the pyramid does have *two* subterranean chambers.

iv. The Third Pyramid of Gîza

In discussing this monument (II.134) the following issues are addressed: the builder, dimensions and materials. These break down into two categories: (a) matters of tradition; (b) matters of observation.

(a) Matters of tradition

Herodotus' preferred view on the question of the builder is that the pyramid was constructed by Mykerinos, a good Greek rendering of the royal name Menkaure'.

This attribution is certainly correct, though the king is erroneously stated to be the son of Cheops. As with the two other major Gîza pyramids, Herodotus is confronted with an ‘alternative’ ascription, in this instance a Greek claim that the pyramid was built by the courtesan Rhodopis. This is a legendary statement which has no historical foundation, and he rightly rejects it.

(b) Matters of observation

On dimensions the point of emphasis is the inferiority in size to the monument of his father, i.e. Cheops according to Herodotus’ erroneous view. He gives the figure as 3 *plethra* less 20 Greek feet on each side, i.e. somewhere on the scale *c.* 83 m–99 m. This figure falls rather short of the true measurement of *c.* 108.5 m. The only other comment relevant here concerns building stone. Herodotus claims that half is made of Aswan granite (λίθου . . . Αἰθιοπικοῦ), a statement which is misleading in two respects: first it is only the casing which is of Aswan granite whereas the internal blocks are of local limestone; second, only one third, not a half, is constructed in this way.

v. The Hawara Pyramid

The description of this monument is appended to that of the Labyrinth. Herodotus states that there is a pyramid of 40 *orguiai* at the corner of this building which had large sculptures carved on it and a subterranean passage leading into it, but he shows no knowledge of the builder (Amenemhet III) or of its functional relationship to the Labyrinth. There is certainly a pyramid on the north side of the Labyrinth, but, when we compare this structure with Herodotus’ statements, it quickly emerges that his information is of very variable value. The observation on the internal passage is correct to the extent that there is such a structure in the body of the pyramid, though it is not strictly ὑπὸ γῆν. On the other hand, the positioning of the building in relation to the Labyrinth is badly wrong since the pyramid lies on its axis, not at the corner. Furthermore, the claim that the monument was a pyramid of 40 *orguiai* (*c.* 71 m–85 m) is most imprecise since it is never made clear whether this figure refers to height (actually *c.* 58 m) or length of side (actually *c.* 106.6 m). Perhaps the first is more likely, but, either way, Herodotus’ measurement is highly inaccurate. The presence of sculptures on the surface cannot be refuted or confirmed since the stone casing-blocks which once covered the mud-brick core have been long since lost and, with them, any decoration which they may have borne. Their existence should not, however, be dismissed out of hand, though such embellishments need not have been contemporary with the construction of the building and may have been added much later.

vi. The Temple of Zeus (Amon-re’) at Thebes

The information given about this monument is very restricted and appears only incidentally as part of discussions (a) of sacred animals (II.74) and (b) of the problems presented by comparative Greek and Egyptian chronology (II.143). We are informed

that sacred snakes were buried in the temple, that it had a large hall (μέγαρον) and that it contained wooden statues of high priests 345 in number. The temple is not ascribed to any builder, but that is not surprising since the *raisons d'être* for the references to the temple have nothing to do with specific Egyptian kings. It is generally assumed that the Theban temple in question is that of Karnak, and that is a very plausible view, but it should be remembered that the Luxor temple is also a very substantial structure and would fit perfectly adequately what little is said. Be that as it may, the comments, in the main, have some Egyptological basis: the mummies of sacred snakes have never been found, to my knowledge, in a Theban temple, but burial within temple precincts can certainly be paralleled;¹⁵ hypostyle halls at Thebes can be enormous—the famous Great Hypostyle at Karnak measures c. 103 m north-south and c. 52 m east-west; finally, large numbers of statues were certainly set up in temples, e.g. the Karnak and Luxor caches,¹⁶ and these included statues of high priests, though the majority are of stone, as indeed we should expect them to be.

CATEGORY 2. BUILDINGS BADLY RUINED

This category embraces six structures: i. The temple complex at Memphis, particularly the temple of Ptah (Hephaistos) (II.108, 110, 112, 121, 136, 141, 153, 176); ii. Obelisks in the temple of **Rē** (Helios) at Heliopolis (II.111); iii. The temple of Bubastis (II.137–8); iv. The Labyrinth (II.148); v. The Biahmu colossi (II.149); and vi. The temple of Leto (Wadjet) at Buto (II.155).¹⁷ At various times, Herodotus discusses, or at least mentions, five aspects of these buildings: (1) the builder; (2) the divine owner; (3) the location; (4) architectural features (particularly dimensions); and (5) function. There is, however, no single case where all seven topics appear together in the treatment of one specific building. As for sources, the situation is comparable to that of the previous category. Autopsy features explicitly in the case of the temple of **Amon-rē** at Thebes (143ff.) and the Labyrinth (148.5). The information on Memphis is not stated to derive from autopsy, but Herodotus does speak of getting information from priests of Memphis at II.2.5 and 113.1, and that is most naturally interpreted as meaning that he had been there. The wording in the discussion of the Bubastite temple at II.137.5 may imply autopsy, though this is not a necessary assumption. The wording of II.150.1 must mean that there is an element of autopsy in II.149, but whether the description of the Biahmu colossi at 149.2 originates from that source cannot be determined. On the other hand, *gnome* features explicitly at II.112.2 and 137.5, and we must clearly make allowance for the presence of hearsay evidence throughout (cf. II.99.1).

i. The Temple of Ptah at Memphis

Herodotus mentions this edifice and its associated structures more frequently than any other building complex in Egypt (see fig. 12.3).¹⁸ The information may be tabulated as follows:

II.101: Moeris (Amenemhet III) is stated to have built the north pylon of the

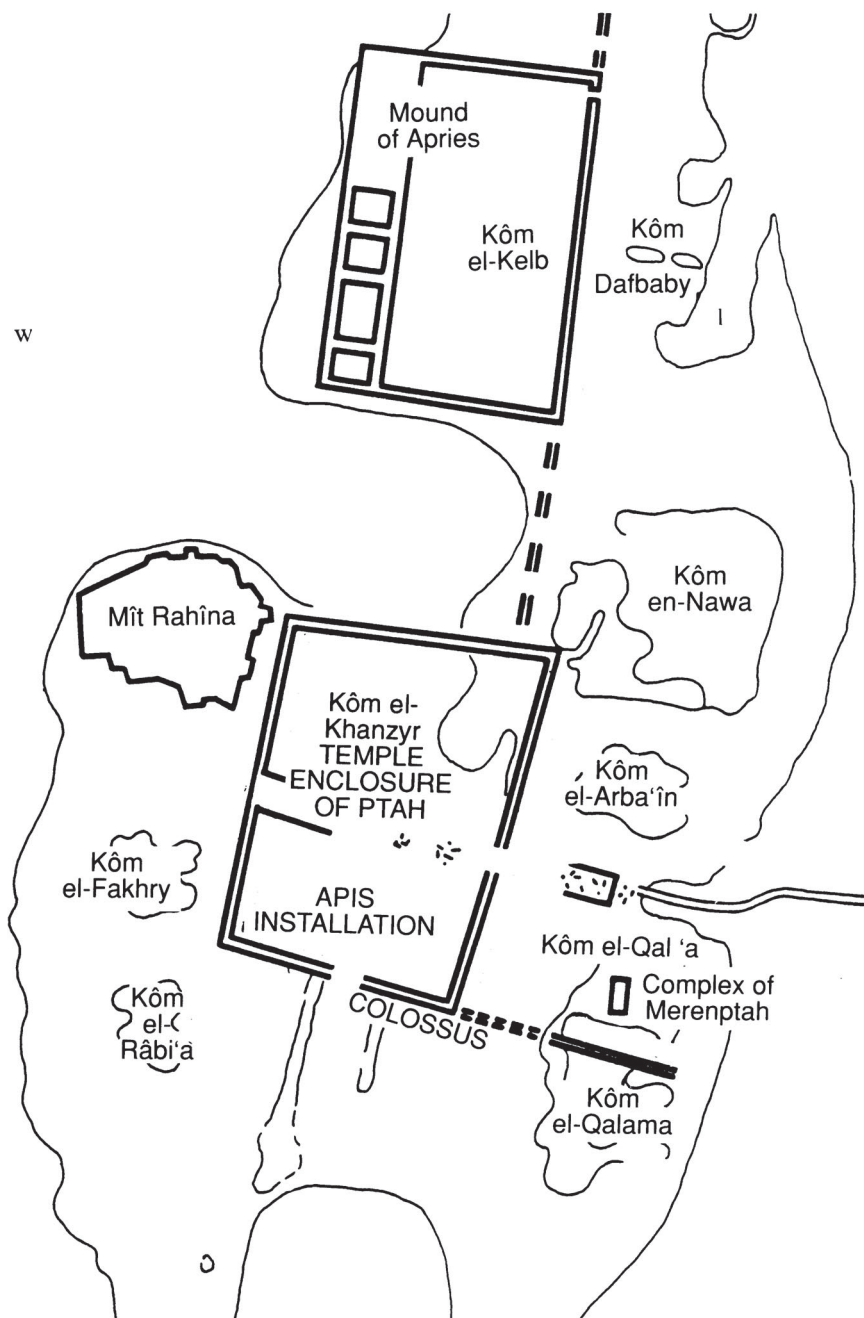


Figure 12.3 Sketch plan of the ruin mounds of Memphis showing the position and outline of the great temple enclosure of the temple of Ptah-Hephaistos.

temple; this attribution and location are confirmed in some measure by archaeological evidence.

II.108.2: large stones are said to have been brought to the temple in the time of Sesostris. It seems probable that these were obelisks, but there is no monument of that kind attributable to any of the obvious historical prototypes of Sesostris in the temple area. Since, however, the site has been so badly ravaged,¹⁹ this *argumentum e silentio* should not be pressed, and there is certainly nothing intrinsically implausible in the statement. Therefore, Herodotus' information on this case can neither be confirmed nor denied.

II.110: Sesostris set up two statues before the temple of Ptah of himself and his wife which were 30 cubits high (between c. 13.4 m and 16 m) and four statues of his children 20 cubits high. Precise identification of these monuments is not made any easier by the extreme imprecision of Herodotus' siting: they are simply said to be *πρὸ τοῦ Ἡφαιστείου* without any indication of a point of the compass. The two best-known surviving examples are those of Ramesses II, one of the prototypes of Sesostris. One is the recumbent limestone specimen known locally as 'Abu'l-Hôl which lies just outside the southern entrance of the *temenos* and bears a representation of one of his many daughters in relief by the left leg. The other, now in Cairo's Ramsis Square, was discovered within the enclosure, almost certainly at or near its original site, and is made of granite. It bears a representation of his daughter and queen Bint-Anath on one side. The height of the first statue could fit Herodotus' figure well, whilst the second is rather shorter, but in neither case should the size issue exercise us unduly since, when considering Herodotus' numbers, we must always bear in mind that they cannot be taken literally, especially when they contain a 3 or multiple thereof (see above, p. 278). It should also be noted that we cannot be sure that either of these statues is one of those mentioned by Herodotus; fragments of others, great and small, have come to light in the area and will doubtless continue to do so.²⁰ In addition, many must have been lost beyond recall, quite possibly those ascribed to Sesostris amongst them, but we can at the very least say that the granite colossus mentioned above does show that Herodotus' description is generally in harmony with a known monument from the site which could have been ascribed in antiquity to Sesostris, and that, in itself, justifies a measure of confidence in his description.

II.112: Proteus is given the credit for a *temenos* south of the Hephaistion which is described as beautiful and well decorated and is claimed to have contained the temple of the Foreign Aphrodite. In dealing with this temple Herodotus uses *gnome* to define more precisely the divine tenant. The attribution of the *temenos* is certainly incorrect since King Proteus is not a historical figure, but, although the site of the Aphrodite temple has not yet been identified, its existence should not be doubted for three reasons: there is substantial evidence of foreign settlement in the relevant section of the site; a Phoenician dedication to Astarte was discovered there; and dedications to Hathor, the Egyptian equivalent of Astarte, have also come to light in the area.²¹

II.121: Rhampsinitos is claimed to have been responsible for the pylon on the west side of the temple of Hephaistos and for two statues in front of it. Rhampsinitos is best regarded as a composite figure encapsulating the Ramesses kings of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties, though Ramesses II provided the biggest single input. The substantial evidence for building by Ramesses II

and later Ramesside kings in the area of the west gate gives powerful support to Herodotus' claim, though complete confirmation is not possible.²² The dimensions of the statues, as recorded here, are not intrinsically implausible and are comparable with those of known statues of Ramesses II. The names ascribed to them are also not implausible, though again they cannot be confirmed—they have a rather folk ring to them and, if genuine, were presumably unofficial.

II.136: Asykhis built the east pylon of the temple of Hephaistos which Herodotus claims to be much the most beautiful and biggest of all of them. It had sculptures carved on it and other architectural features in great number far surpassing any other pylon. The existence of this pylon cannot be confirmed, though there is room for one in the east wall of the temple immediately to the west of the remains of a probable pylon of Ptolemy IV, but the presence in the *temenos* of blocks of Sheshonk I, the historical prototype of Asykhis, justifies a measure of confidence.²³ The general comments on pylon decoration are sound, and the claim that it was in this case of very high quality is compatible with what we know of the work of this ruler elsewhere.

II.153: Psammetikhos is stated to have constructed the southern pylon at Memphis and a court for the Apis bull opposite (*ἐναντίον*), a location which would most naturally be interpreted as being south of the pylon. The latter was covered with sculptures and surrounded by a colonnade which was supported on statues instead of columns. There is no evidence at present of Psammetikhos I's activities at this point on the site of Memphis, though there is elsewhere in the area.²⁴ However, we do know of an Apis installation in the south-west angle of the extant *temenos* wall of Ptah with blocks bearing names of other members of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. In its present form this structure is now recognized to be of Thirtieth Dynasty date,²⁵ but the excavator very plausibly argued that it embodied blocks of a previous structure which had been pulled down and cannibalized. If so, we have evidence of a Saite Apis building in roughly the right area. Sadly, however, a serious problem still remains. This southern enclosure wall, as known at present, is generally held to be Ptolemaic or Roman, but the likelihood is that it follows the line of the Ramesside wall at this point. If so, the Saite wall also probably ran essentially along the relevant line, and evidence has recently been produced which goes some way towards supporting this view.²⁶ Therefore, if we are correct in interpreting Herodotus' 'opposite' as 'south of', we have to assume one of three things: either the known Thirtieth Dynasty Apis-installation is on a different site from that of Psammetikhos or that the Saite structure had an element on the other side of the wall south of the south pylon or that Herodotus was simply mistaken in his location. The choice between these alternatives must remain in abeyance in the light of the present state of excavation on the site, though we may remain cautiously optimistic that current work at Memphis will provide a resolution of this conundrum. As for the architectural features ascribed to the building, they are unproblematical with the exception of the description of the supports of the colonnade. Herodotus' claim that these were caryatids is extremely difficult to credit; it is much more probable that they were pseudo-caryatids, i.e. pillars/columns *fronted* by statues. The description is, therefore, probably inaccurate in this respect.

II.176: Amasis is claimed to have dedicated a remarkably large recumbent statue 75 Greek feet long (at least 22 m) before the temple of Hephaistos at Memphis. On the same base and flanking it on either side were two more granite statues, each of which was 20 Greek feet tall. He also constructed the temple of Isis in Memphis which was both large and well worth seeing. The information on the location of the statues is extremely imprecise, possibly because they were a well-known feature not requiring a more precise fix. On the ground there is nothing which can in any way be connected with these structures—we do know of a block of Amasis found along the east-west axis,²⁷ but this provides too little for any plausible guess as to its original site or the feature from which it derived. Assessed on general grounds of probability, the description excites a mixed reaction: the alleged height of the largest colossus is extremely difficult to credit since it would have been the tallest Egyptian statue known, an improbable situation for a Twenty-sixth Dynasty monument. On the other hand, the claim that it formed a group of three with a smaller statue on either side is entirely in keeping with Egyptian practice. The height of the lesser pieces (at least c. 6 m) is not problematic in itself, though the fact that the measurement of the main monument is highly suspect cannot fail to engender caution. As for the temple of Isis, no such building has ever been identified at Memphis, but Amasis certainly built there, and his interest in the cult of Isis is confirmed by the fact that he erected a temple for her at Philae. There are, therefore, sound reasons for accepting Herodotus' claim.

It should be noted, in conclusion, that the comments made above, where they can be related to a specific point in the temple, refer to the *temenos* wall or the area outside. This should not, however, necessarily be taken to imply that Herodotus did not have access to any other part of the structure; *it might simply mean that the features which he felt impelled to discuss by the historical material with which he is dealing all lay in those areas.*

ii. The obelisks at Heliopolis

The attribution to Pheros of obelisks in the temple of Heliopolis does not give rise to undue unease. The name Pheros was, in origin, simply a Hellenization of the Egyptian *Pr-ʿ3*, 'Pharaoh', but there developed subsequently a specific association of the name with Amenemhet II which had already become established by Herodotus' time. This king was the successor of Senwosret I, one of the contributors to the Sesostris legend, and, therefore, genealogically entirely compatible with Herodotus' narrative. At present, there is only one standing obelisk on the site, one of a pair erected by Senwosret I at the entrance to the main temple. This at least confirms the presence of two obelisks erected by a king of the dynasty in which Pheros needs to be located. There were, however, in antiquity many others, now long gone, and we must allow for the possibility that it was two of these which were attributed to Pheros. As for dimensions, the height is given as 100 cubits (at least 44 m). This is not absolutely impossible, but it would be taller than the tallest known, which attains a mere 41.8 m. Herodotus' round figure reinforces our suspicions and strongly suggests that we should regard it as impressionistic only. The width at 8 cubits (at least 3.5 m) is unexceptionable. If it is indeed correct, and we apply the standard ratio of height to thickness, the height ought to have been c. 36.5 m.

iii. The Temple of Bubastis

This description (II.137.5–138) is the fullest account of any Egyptian temple in Herodotus. It occurs in his discussion of the activities of Sesostris, but the building is never ascribed to him. The size and expense of the temple are factors in his description, but they are not discussed to any significant degree; the heaviest point of emphasis, rather untypically, is its beauty. The structure is now very badly ruined indeed, but available evidence allows us to confirm many elements to some extent. In the first place the temple is stated to be surrounded by water except for the entrance, but the detailed description of the topography strictly contradicts this: ‘Apart from the entrance the rest is an island; for canals flow into it from the Nile without merging with each other, but each one flows as far as the entrance, the one flowing round on one side, the other on the other side.’ This ought to mean that the canals flow around the temple and continue to maintain their separate identity on the other side. If, however, this were so, ‘the rest’ would *not* be an island. Clearly, there is some imprecision here, and we have to think of a watercourse fed by canals from the river and encircling the temple ‘apart from the entrance’, i.e. the temple was surrounded by a crescent-shaped sacred lake of the *ἰῥω* type.²⁸ This feature is said to be shaded with trees, a normal characteristic of such lakes. The temple is further claimed to have a pylon 10 *orguiiai* high (a favourite Herodotean dimension, c. 18 m–21 m) which was adorned with sculptures 6 cubits high, the whole being described as remarkable, i.e. it counts as a *θῶμα*, ‘marvel’. This pylon is now destroyed, but the description is not intrinsically suspect. The temple is also said, quite correctly, to have lain in a hollow, but this phenomenon is wrongly related to Sesostris’ engineering activities.²⁹ The temple is claimed to have been surrounded by a wall of stone covered with sculptures, of which traces have been discovered; it is also stated that there was inside it a grove of very tall trees (undemonstrable, but not improbable) and a shrine containing a statue, a description of the main temple building which is laconic, to say the least, but certainly correct, as far as it goes. The ‘temple’ is described as being a stade long on all sides (somewhere between 178 m and 213 m). The precise point of reference of the term *νηός* is debatable. Does it denote the stone wall (*ἱερόν*) *plus* the main temple structure inside or does it refer to the latter only? Since the term at 138.3 seems to cover the central temple building, the most natural interpretation of *ἱερόν* is to take it in the first sense. If so, Herodotus’ measurement is approximately correct. Finally, Herodotus describes a stone-paved road 4 *plethra* broad which ran from the main entrance of the temple eastwards through the market-place for a distance of c. 3 stades (c. 535–639 m). There were tall trees on either side, and it ended at the temple of a god identified with the Greek Hermes. The main entrance of the temple certainly lay on the east side, but the road appears to have been rather longer than Herodotus’ figure, Wilkinson assessing it at c. 686 m. Again, however, the figure is a 3 figure and should be taken as symbolic only, i.e. it denotes no more than a very long road (see above, p. 278). There was indeed a temple at the relevant point, but there is no evidence at present that it was connected with Hermes/Thoth.

iv. The Labyrinth

To Herodotus the Labyrinth was the most spectacular of all Egyptian buildings (II.148). The description, which is explicitly based on autopsy and hearsay, appears as part of his discussion of the Dodecarchs to whom he ascribes the building, claiming that they constructed it as a memorial. In reality, it is much older than the Dodecarch period (seventh century BC), since it was indubitably constructed by Amenemhet III in the Twelfth Dynasty (c. 1842–1797), though later additions are a distinct possibility. The local priests also indicated that it contained the tombs of the Dodecarchs as well as those of sacred crocodiles. Neither of these statements on its function can be proved correct, but it is far from impossible that there is a measure of truth in both of them. Herodotus locates the structure above Lake Moeris roughly in the vicinity of Crocodilopolis, a fix which is not incorrect, as far as it goes, but it is distinctly imprecise. The building is presented emphatically as a *θῶμα* ('marvel') far surpassing Greek achievements. The labour and expense are both mentioned, but Herodotus never gives measurements in arithmetical terms, preferring to indicate size by comparison with other large buildings, clearly on the principle that this is a more vivid way of putting over the point. He gives a detailed description of the internal features, including emphasis on the high quality of the masonry, the overall effect of this accumulation of detail being to create a concrete and vivid impression of the structure.

v. The Biahmu colossi

The account of these monuments (II.149.2–3) is confused. There is no indication of a source, but the fact that the description of the Labyrinth is based on autopsy and also the wording of the beginning of II.150 justify confidence that Herodotus had seen the monuments, though how much of the detail derives from that experience must remain an open question. He speaks of two pyramids 50 *orgui* (between c. 89 m and 105 m) in height situated roughly in the middle of Lake Moeris and topped by stone statues seated on a chair. In this context he can only be referring to the Biahmu colossi of Amenemhet III, though he attributes the monuments to no ruler and simply describes them because of their association with Lake Moeris, the discussion of which, in turn, is foisted on the narrative for no other reason than its connection with the Labyrinth. The description is apposite to the extent that the monuments consisted of seated royal statues placed on a base, but it is otherwise highly misleading in a number of respects: first, they were only surrounded by water during the inundation season, i.e. the description is only valid for part of the year; second, the pedestals were not pyramids, though from a distance they might have been taken as such; and finally, they were only 6.4 m in height—indeed, statues and pedestals together would not have reached 19 m—so that, yet again, we are confronted with an erroneous estimation of height.

vi. The Temple of Leto (Wadjet) at Buto

This monument is discussed at II.155–6. It is described as an oracular shrine which was large and had a pylon 10 *orgui* (c. 18–21 m) high (see above). Within the

temenos there was a shrine in the form of a monolithic box whose walls were 40 cubits sq. (c. 18–21 m). This was roofed by a monolithic block which had a *παρωροφίς* 4 cubits (c. 2 m) deep. The entire feature is described as a very great marvel. We are informed, in addition, that an island called Khemmis was connected with the temple, and that this island was alleged to be capable of floating, though Herodotus expresses considerable scepticism on this claim. We are also informed that there was a large temple on it dedicated to Apollo (Horus) as well as three altars, and many trees, including palms. This island was also a marvel in Herodotus' eyes—but not quite such a big one as the shrine.

The ruined state of Buto and our present knowledge of the site make it impossible to test all this on the ground.³⁰ However, we do know of the remains of a substantial temple area devoted to Leto/Wadjet consisting of a very large *temenos* which enclosed a big stone temple. This at least proves that Herodotus' adjective 'great' is entirely justified. There is no corroboration of the existence or size of the pylon, but the former can be taken for granted, and the height is not implausible. The description of the monolithic shrine is, however, problematic: on the basis of Egyptian architectural practice we should not expect the structure to be a perfect square, and Herodotus' laxity in such matters elsewhere suggests that we should suspect inaccuracy rather than an anomalous building; furthermore, the size alleged is impossible if the building *were* monolithic. Given Herodotus' inaccuracies elsewhere with dimensions, we should not press the figure—it is likely enough that it is no more than a very rough approximation. However, he may even have been wrong about the monolithic character of the structure, misled by the skill of the stonemasons in constructing it from large blocks of stone and by the finish applied by painters and sculptors. As for the roof, if dimensions are even approximately correct, it could not possibly have been monolithic, though Herodotus is not likely to have been in a position to put that to the proof. The cornice (*παρωροφίς*) is a standard feature, and, at one-tenth, the ratio of its depth to that of the building as a whole is roughly within Egyptian parameters for such features. Written sources leave no doubt of the existence of a cult place whose name can be Hellenized as Khemmis, and there is some reason—falling far short of proof—to believe that it may have lain to the east of the city. Confirming details of the description on site is impossible, but Herodotus' account does conform to information provided by Egyptian written and iconographic sources. The claim that it floated is rightly dismissed by Herodotus—it probably reflects nothing more than contamination by Greek traditions on the floating island of Ortygia-Delos associated with Leto.³¹

To conclude the analysis of this body of data a number of points should be made: unlike the buildings discussed in the first section of this study there is no comment in this category on methods of construction or on the time taken to erect the monuments. The major concerns are the builder, the position of the structure, and its physical features, though the divine owner and the function of the edifice can also be a subject of comment.

These points of emphasis clearly indicate that the monuments are not discussed for their own sake but because they are 'proofs' (*τεκμήρια*) of the greatness and achievement of specific figures in the narrative. If we evaluate the information, we can tabulate the results as follows:

Builders: comments made 8; confirmed accurate 3; unprovable but possibly correct 3; incorrect 2.

Divine owner: comments made 6; confirmed accurate 4; unprovable but possible 2.

Location: comments made 12; confirmed accurate 5 (though one imprecise); possibly correct but undemonstrable 5; inaccurate or incorrect 2.

Architectural features: comments made 21—size 3; measurements 5 (4 cases certainly inaccurate); beauty 2; structure 5 (4 accurate, 1 plausible but undemonstrable, 1 inaccurate); decoration 3 (all plausible but undemonstrable); element of marvellous 2: expense of building 2; labour needed for building 1.

Function: most of the buildings discussed are temples, and their function is self-evident. The only structure where Herodotus makes a specific comment is the Labyrinth, of whose original purpose he shows himself ignorant, despite the fact that he had access to local sources. What he says of later use is possible but unprovable.

CATEGORY 3. BUILDINGS NOT SURVIVING

There are six examples, or groups of examples, in this category: i. The temple of Perseus at Panopolite Khemmis (Akhmîm) (II.91); ii. Rhampsinitos' building for storing treasure (II.121a);³² iii. The Pyramid of Asykhis (II.136); iv. The royal tombs at Sais (II.169; III.16.6); v. Subsidiary installations in the temple of Athene (Neith) at Sais (II.170); vi. Amasis' monuments at Sais (II.175–6).³³ Herodotus mentions the following aspects: (1) the builder; (2) the divine owner; (3) location; (4) methods of building; (5) construction time; (6) architectural features; (7) function. Autopsy was certainly operative at Buto and Sais, and the wording of II.91 strongly suggests that it was in evidence there also. Elsewhere hearsay information is clearly the source for Herodotus' statements.

i. The temple of Perseus

The temple of Perseus is located at Khemmis in Upper Egypt (II.91). The builder is not stated, but that is easily explained by the fact that the passage does not appear in the historical section but arises out of Herodotus' concern with the question of cultural interchange. It is clear that Perseus should be identified with the god Min-Hor, the major god of Akhmîm; as for the temple, it is known that there were several such structures in the city, though very little survives of any of them now. Herodotus provides a thumbnail sketch of the building, informing us that it had a very large pylon preceded by statues and, in addition, a *temenos* wall, a shrine and a cult image. All of this is quite unexceptionable, but the details cannot be corroborated on the ground or from other descriptions.

ii. The treasury of Rhampsinitos

In the course of narrating the tale of the treasury of Rhampsinitos Herodotus speaks of the construction of the chamber in which the treasure was to be stored (II.121a).

It is described as a stone edifice one of whose walls was the outer wall of the king's dwelling, but it was constructed in such a way that a stone could be removed to admit a man. Obviously, since the story itself is a fiction, we cannot expect to confirm such a detail from any extant palace, but the description is strongly reminiscent of the crypts occurring in late temples and designed to store valuable or sacred items, and, to that extent, it may reflect Egyptian architectural practice.

iii. The pyramid of Asykhis

At II.136 Herodotus informs us in a narrative with more than a dash of fantasy in it that King Asykhis built as a memorial (*μνημόσυνον*) for himself, a pyramid of mud brick which bore an inscription in stone describing the origin of the structure. There is much to excite anguish here. Certainly the passage shows awareness of the fact that the Egyptians built some of their pyramids of mud brick and covered them with stone. But these constructions were rather more than mere *μνημόσυνα*, and they were certainly not erected by kings of the period to which Asykhis must be assigned. For the latter is probably to be identified with Sheshonk I of the Twenty-second Dynasty which, as far as is known, only constructed temple-court tombs in the temple of Amun at Tanis very much in the style ascribed to the royal tombs at Sais (see below). As for the tenor of the inscription, no Egyptian text known to me speaks in such terms, though grandiloquence and bombast are commonplace ingredients. We can be confident that some ancient Egyptian pseudo-philologist had sadly misled Herodotus on this point.

iv. The royal tombs at Sais

At II.169.4–5 (cf. III.16.6), we are informed that the tombs of the kings of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty lay in the courtyard of the temple of Athene (Neith), and that the burial place of Amasis lay further from the temple's hall than that of Apries and his ancestors. They each consisted of a colonnade of stone which was large and adorned with palm columns and other expensive features. The colonnades had two doors inside which was the sepulchre.

Checking this description on the ground is impossible in view of the sadly ruined state of the city of Sais, but mortuary installations still extant at Medinet Habu and Tanis leave no reasonable doubt that Herodotus is essentially correct (see fig. 12.4). However, one area of imprecision should be noted, i.e. the burial place probably lay beneath the floor of the chamber behind the doors rather than simply inside them.

v. Subsidiary installations in the temple of Athene at Sais

Herodotus mentions several such installations at II.170, one of which he claims to have seen himself, though evidently, if he saw one of them, it is likely that he saw the lot. These he is led to discuss because of their physical and, to some degree, functional association with the royal tombs described in the previous chapter. He locates a tomb of Osiris in the enclosure of Athene (Neith) behind and adjacent to her temple. This cannot be identified today, but written sources confirm the existence

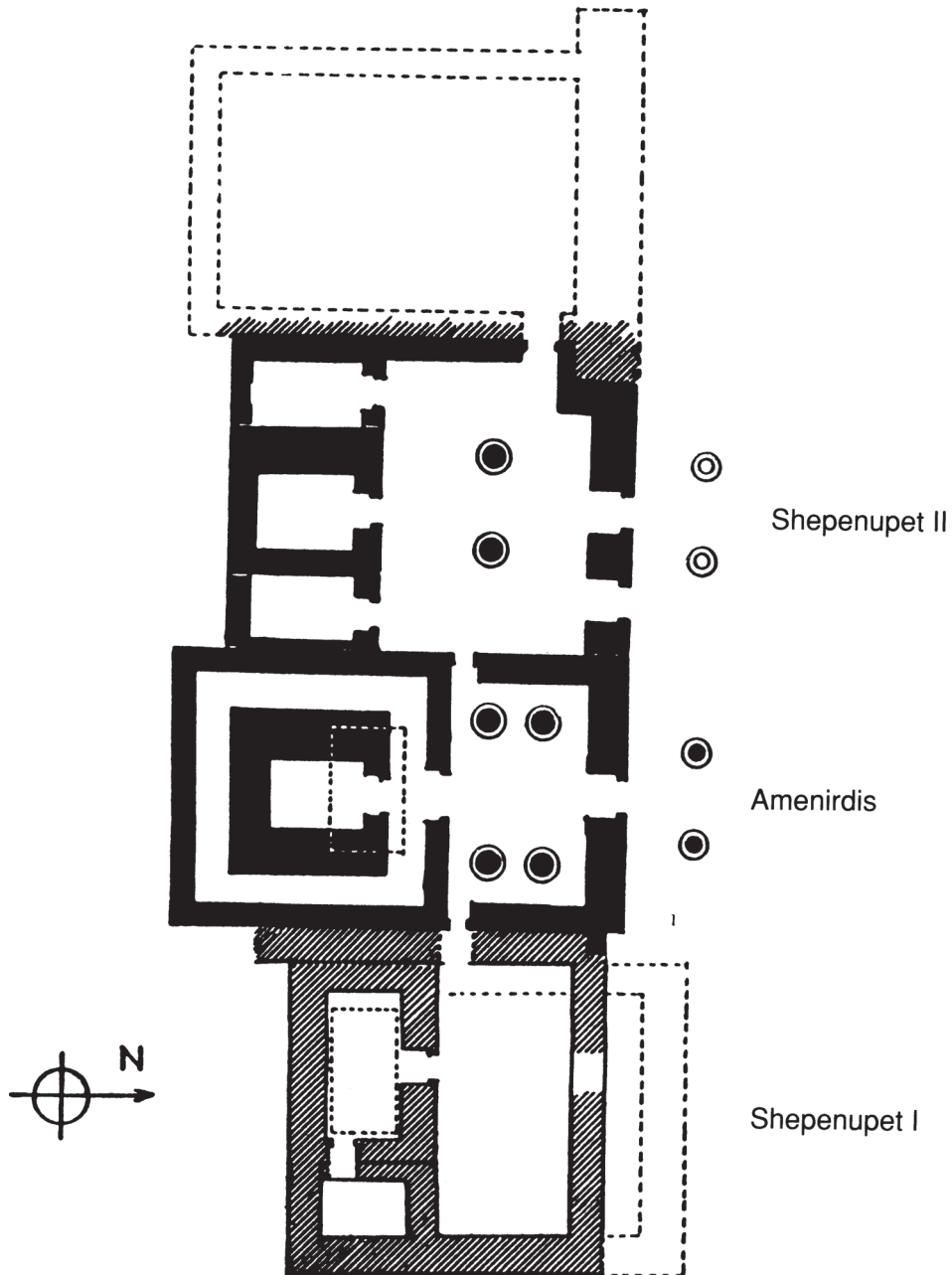


Figure 12.4 The chapel tombs of the divine votresses at Medinet Habu. That of Amenirdis shows, from right to left, a portico supported on two columns, a hypostyle vestibule, and the cult chapel beneath which is found the burial vault (indicated by the broken lines).

of this element. We are also informed that there were in the *temenos* large stone obelisks and, in addition, a lake with a stone surround on the quality of whose workmanship he specifically comments. Again, we cannot confirm archaeologically, but these features are entirely acceptable on epigraphic and general grounds.

vi. Amasis' monuments at Sais

At II.175–6.2, Herodotus mentions monuments left by Amasis in the temple of Athene (Neith) at Sais as part of the general discussion of the latter's reign. He mentions a pylon astonishing both in height and in bulk, large statues (one 20 Greek feet high lying on its back), very long human-headed sphinxes and enormous 'stones' which must have included obelisks. Some of the stone, we are informed, came from quarries at Memphis, and some from Elephantine. He mentions, in particular, a structure made of Aswan granite which had taken 2,000 men three years to transport. It lay near the entrance to the temple and had never been dragged in for reasons on which there were different opinions.

On the whole these statements are unexceptionable, but one or two comments must be treated with extreme caution. As usual, we should discount the figure 3 as a literal statement; it simply means 'a long time in terms of years'. The measurements of the stone chamber are also a little high for comfort, but, since very large monuments of this type were certainly constructed by the Ancient Egyptians, we should not succumb too readily to abject scepticism; it is conceivable that Herodotus is not far wide of the mark even if the figures are a little inflated.

CONCLUSIONS

The preceding analysis gives much food for thought and sadly suggests that, when we are using Herodotus' accounts of Egyptian buildings, we must proceed with extreme circumspection. The following points, in particular, need to be borne in mind:

(a) *Foci of interest*. Our analysis indicates that we must never take the descriptions in isolation; they will always belong in a specific context and must be read within that context. In particular, we must always bear in mind the factors determining what is discussed. Some of these factors are of a general nature: in the first place, the monuments are not simply described for their own sake but are almost always related to historical or legendary figures,³⁴ and their appearance in Herodotus' narrative reflects his concern with those figures; an obvious corollary of this point is that, if a monument is not attached in some way to a figure in whom he is interested, it is unlikely to get discussed. The second general point is that monuments discussed cluster in areas where Greeks were particularly concentrated. Evidently, for monuments to feature in his narrative they must have had an opportunity to impinge powerfully on Greek consciousness. Furthermore, several monuments are regarded as being extraordinary structures; they are *θώματα*, 'marvels', and *τὸ θωμάσιον*, 'the

marvellous', has long been recognized as a major factor in attracting Herodotus' attention. Another consideration which can arrest his attention is aesthetic appeal, which comes out in the account of Asykhis' pylon at II.136.1, and also in the description of the temple at Bubastis (II.137.5). In addition to these general determinants there can also be factors specific to a monument or monument group. In the case of the Gîza pyramids the discussion of the Great Pyramid radically orientates discussion of the other three, determining what is discussed and what is not. When evaluating and using Herodotus' descriptions such considerations must always be identified and their effects assessed. Herodotus' failure to discuss something may well reflect nothing more than the fact that his attention was not orientated in a particular direction by such factors. Above all we must never lose sight of the elementary point, too often ignored, that Herodotus is not producing a *Baedeker*.

(b) *Traditions*. Traditions connected with monuments may be Egyptian, Greek, or a combination of both, though sometimes the precise source can be open to question. If we consider statements about builders in our Category 1 buildings, we find that three out of four are correct. The fourth cannot be completely controlled but is not entirely in error. The kinship relationship of the owner of the subsidiary pyramid to the builder of the Great Pyramid is probably erroneous, but Herodotus does at least know that the monument was built for a woman. Kinship relationships in other respects are demonstrably incorrect. In Categories 2 and 3 this overall situation justifies considerable, though not total, confidence in Herodotus' attributions *per se* but caution where statements are made on family relations. Attributions may be correct, or at least impossible to refute, but they can also be demonstrably wrong, e.g. the attribution of a temple at Memphis to the non-existent Proteus (II.112), the ascription of a brick pyramid to Asykhis/Sheshonk (II.136) and the false claim that the Labyrinth was built by the Dodecarchs (II.148). In other types of tradition the situation is less satisfactory: in Category 1 sometimes good information is purveyed, e.g. the importance of the *corvée* system, but serious misunderstandings are easily detectable, e.g. on the function of the causeway of the Great Pyramid, and sometimes what appears an old tradition at first sight may be a relatively recent construction, e.g. the account of the methods of building the Great Pyramid. The moral emerging from the analysis of traditions on Categories 2 and 3 is the same. Clearly, where any traditional material beyond a simple attribution is concerned, we should proceed with extreme caution; we certainly should not simply assume that Herodotus' stories are reliable. Let it be reiterated, however, that even attributions cannot be accepted with total confidence, and we should always try to find confirmatory evidence.

(c) *Descriptions*. Descriptions show some interesting traits. In Category 1 location is usually recorded adequately but not with the precision of a modern scholar, e.g. an Egyptologist would probably say that the Great Pyramid's subsidiary pyramids lay on the south-east side of the Great Pyramid in the angle between the pyramid and the mortuary temple; to Herodotus they lie 'in front' (ἐμπροσθε τῆς μεγάλης πυραμίδος). Clearly meticulous attention to detail in such matters was regarded by our author as surplus to requirements. Even worse, the positioning of the Hawara pyramid is unequivocally wrong, despite the fact that he had visited the site. As for Categories 2 and 3, the overall situation on positioning is that the data are normally

correct, as far as they go, but do not show any great regard for precision, e.g. at II.148 the Labyrinth is merely said to be ὀλίγον ὑπὲρ τῆς λίμνης τῆς Μοίριος κατὰ Κροκοδείλων καλεομένην πόλιν μάλιστα καὶ κείμενον ('a little above the Lake of Moeris lying roughly opposite what is called the City of Crocodiles'). However, on the physical relationship of the Labyrinth to its pyramid Herodotus is badly adrift, and his positioning of the Biahmu colossi (II.149) involves, at the very least, a deep misunderstanding. Where measurements are concerned there is always a conversion problem, though it cannot be said that this gives rise to insuperable difficulties. On the causeway of the Great Pyramid the width is within acceptable parameters but the length much too great. On the Great Pyramid the length of side is acceptable but the height much too great. In both cases the aspect most easily measured is goodish. Height, being difficult to determine, would always create problems, and statements on that score should evidently always be treated with circumspection. We find the same position with the subsidiary pyramid and Second Pyramid, but the Third Pyramid's length of side is substantially adrift. This indicates that Herodotus is *capable* of purveying quite accurate information on such matters but cannot be relied upon to do so, even when it would be relatively easy to acquire the information on the spot. A further caveat is suggested by the fact that the use of symbolic or impressionistic numbers is clearly detectable at several points. The fact that many other figures are round figures is of a piece with this. Overall, the information on such matters does not evince a modern concern with precision. Providing an *impression* of what something is like could be quite enough. The comments on the quality and character of the masonry of the Great Pyramid complex are perfectly acceptable, but there is inaccuracy on the number of courses of the Second Pyramid which were made of granite. However, getting precise information on that point might not be very easy if we bear in mind the likelihood of the presence of wind-blown sand. Less venial is the exaggeration of the use of granite in the Third Pyramid. Therefore, in addition to measurements, Herodotus' description of architectural features is not marked by any great precision, and in the case of monuments which have not survived should never be pressed.

When we turn to Categories 2 and 3, we find that, in the main, the observations which we have made in relation to Category 1 are equally applicable. Herodotus' descriptions of architectural features do not excite great qualms; indeed, the account of the temple of Bubastis is, in general terms, impressive and harmonizes well with what remained into modern times. Measurements, however, tend not to be accurate and occasionally features are misunderstood, e.g. the description of the pedestals of the Biahmu colossi as pyramids and the notion that the columns on the Apis installation at II.153 were true caryatids.

The moral of all this? *Caveat emptor!* If Herodotus says that there was a monument somewhere, it is extremely probable that he is correct. There is a good chance that he will get the builder right, and that his description, in general terms, will be acceptable. Nothing is guaranteed here, however, and measurements, in particular, should be treated with circumspection. The archaeologist who wishes to use his material should bear in mind its limitations—limitations, I hasten to add, from our point of view. Herodotus, after all, had his own agenda, and that brought with it a set of priorities very different from those of most modern scholars.

NOTES

- * The first version of this chapter was delivered at a conference on Herodotus' Book II held at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, in 1991. Subsequent versions were read to the Classics Society of Saint David's College, Lampeter, later in that year, and to the Friends of the Petrie Museum, University College London, in 1992. I benefited greatly from the discussions generated on all these occasions.
- 1 To my knowledge there has never been a detailed and systematic discussion of this topic, though observations abound in many works on details. C.Sourdille covers the sites in his *La durée et l'étendue du voyage d'Hérodote en Égypte*, Paris, 1910, but his account is long outdated and, in any case, always lacked an adequate purchase on Egyptological data. Several writers have discussed Herodotus' accounts of individual monuments, e.g. O.K. Armayor, *Herodotus' Autopsy of the Fayoum: Lake Moeris and the Labyrinth of Egypt*, Amsterdam, 1985.
 - 2 Sources for Egypt have been much discussed of late: see Alan B.Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Introduction*, Leiden, 1975, pp. 77ff.; id., 'Herodotus' account of Pharaonic history', *Historia* 37 (1988), pp. 22ff.; id., 'Herodotus on Egyptians and Libyans', in O.Reverdin and B.Grange (eds), *Hérodote et les peuples non grecs* (Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique 35), Vandoeuvres-Genève, 1990, pp. 223ff.: cf. id., 'Herodotus on Cambyses. Some thoughts on recent work', in A.Kuhrt and H.Sancisi-Weerdenburg (eds), *Achaemenid History. III. Method and Theory* (Proceedings of the London 1985 Achaemenid History Workshop), Leiden, 1988, pp. 57ff. Less sanguine views of his veracity in such matters will be found in D.Fehling, *Die Quellenangaben bei Herodot*, Berlin and New York, 1971, tr. J.G.Howie, *Herodotus and his 'Sources'. Citation, Invention and Narrative Art* (ARCA 21), Leeds, 1989, and Armayor, 'Did Herodotus ever go to Egypt?' *JARCE* 15 (1980), pp. 59ff.; id., 'Sesostris and Herodotus' autopsy of Thrace, Colchis, inland Asia Minor, and the Levant', *HSPb* 84 (1980), pp. 51ff.; id., *Lake Moeris*, op. cit.
 - 3 For a detailed analysis of all these passages see Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Commentary* 99–182, Leiden, 1988, nn. ad loc.
 - 4 For details on building methods see Lloyd, *Commentary* 99–182, nn. on chs 124–5. Discussions of the topic which appeared after the completion of that book—and of unequal value—are: M.Isler, 'Concerning the concave faces on the Great Pyramid', *JARCE* 20 (1983), pp. 27ff.; M.Lehner, 'Some observations on the layout of the Khufu and Khafre pyramids', *JARCE* 20 (1983), pp. 7ff.; I.Hafemann, 'Zum Problem der staatlichen Arbeitspflicht im alten Ägypten. I: Die Königlichen Dekrete des Alten Reiches', *Altorientalische Forschungen* 12 (1985), pp. 3ff.; id., 'Zum Problem der staatlichen Arbeitspflicht im alten Ägypten. II: Auswertung der Expeditionsinschriften des Mittleren Reiches', *ibid.*, pp. 179ff.; Isler, 'On pyramid building', *JARCE* 22 (1985), pp. 129ff.; Lehner, 'The Development of the Giza necropolis: the Khufu project', *MDAIK* 41 (1985), pp. 109ff.; id., 'A contextual approach to the Giza pyramids', *Archiv für Orientforschung* 32 (1985), pp. 136ff.; id., 'The Giza plateau mapping project: season 1984–1985', *Newsletter ARCE* 131 (1985), pp. 23ff.; J.Dorner, 'Form und Ausmasse der Knickpyramide. Neue Beobachtungen und Messungen', *MDAIK* 42 (1986), pp. 43ff.; Lehner, 'The Giza plateau mapping project: season 1986', *Newsletter ARCE* (Fall, 1986), pp. 29ff.; Isler, 'On pyramid building II', *JARCE* 24 (1987), pp. 95ff.; M.Jones, 'Moving blocks in Memphis', *Newsletter ARCE* 140 (1987–8), pp. 19ff.; D.Arnold, 'Manoeuvring casing blocks of pyramids', in J.Baines *et al.* (eds), *Pyramid Studies* (EES Occasional Publication 7), London, 1988, pp. 54ff.; J.A.R.Legon, 'The design of the pyramid of

- Khufu', *Discussions in Egyptology* 12 (1988), pp. 41ff.; Legon, 'A ground plan at Giza', *ibid.* 10 (1988), 33–40; J.C.Deaton, 'On the possible identification of the pyramid machines of Herodotus with the determinative for the Verb *wtsj/twj* "to raise" or "lift"', *ibid.*, 15 (1989), pp. 5ff.; B.J.Kemp, *Ancient Egypt. Anatomy of a Civilization*, London and New York, 1989, pp. 130ff.; Legon, 'The design of the pyramid of Khafre', *Göttinger Miszellen* 110 (1989), pp. 27ff.; *id.*, 'The Giza ground plan and Sphinx', *Discussions in Egyptology* 14 (1989), pp. 53ff.; D.Arnold, *Building in Egypt. Pharaonic Stone Masonry*, New York and Oxford, 1991, pp. 79ff.
- 5 It is, of course, perfectly possible that stone causeways sometimes followed the line of a demolished building ramp.
 - 6 Unfinished pyramids showing the stepped form can still be seen at Giza, e.g. the subsidiary pyramids adjacent to the monument of Mykerinos. They would have been equally visible in Herodotus' time, even if we allow for the effects of wind-blown sand.
 - 7 Herodotus' description of Egyptian boatbuilding at II.96 illustrates this point well.
 - 8 The Karnak ramp visible today within the first court is simply part of a series of ramps which still enveloped the pylon in the nineteenth century and have since been largely destroyed (Arnold, *op. cit.*, 95ff.). They could only be part of a structure which functioned as the equivalent of modern scaffolding since there is simply not space within the courtyard to accommodate the long sloping ramp which would have been used to get the stones from ground level. That structure must have run in from some point on the outer side of the temple. Once the pylon had been constructed, the ramp would normally have been demolished. In this case that process was never completed.
 - 9 As with so many things Greek, there was no general agreement on metrology. The length of the foot varied from 297 mm to 355 mm, and there was, therefore, a corresponding variation in the linear measurements dependent upon it (cf., e.g., *Lexikon der Alten Welt*, Artemis Verlag, Zurich and Stuttgart, 1965, 3424). We cannot be sure in any particular case what standard Herodotus was employing. Furthermore, since we cannot be confident that all the measurements derived from him anyway, we must make allowance for the possibility that putative sources were using different standards. To avoid creating a specious impression of certainty when converting his figures (an error into which I sometimes fell in my *Commentary*), I have usually taken refuge in the rather cumbersome procedure of indicating minima and maxima.
 - 10 See J.W.S.Blom, *De typische Getallen bij Homeros en Herodotos, I, Triaden, Hebdomaden en Enneaden*, Nijmegen, 1936, and Fehling, *op. cit.*, 155ff.
 - 11 Relief sculptures have been discovered both in and probably from the pyramid complex (I.E.S.Edwards, *The Pyramids of Egypt*, revised and updated edn, Harmondsworth, 1985, pp. 134ff.; G.Goyon, 'La chaussée monumentale et le temple de la vallée de la pyramide de Khéops', *BIAO* 67 (1969), pp. 49ff.). These might be taken as evidence that Herodotus was correct in speaking of the use of such decoration on the causeway. Nevertheless, since we still do not have examples which certainly come from the causeway proper, an element of doubt must remain on the matter.
 - 12 W.M.F.Petrie, *The Pyramids and Temples of Gizeh*, 2nd edn, London, 1885, p. 44.
 - 13 The essential structure of such installations consisted of a central island or hill surrounded by water. Since the island/hill was believed to be instinct with life-giving force, the burial of the god within was held to effect his resurrection. For the specimen adjacent to Seti's temple see B.Porter and R.L.B.Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, IV, Oxford, 1939, pp. 29ff.

- 14 Some have preferred to regard the passage as a late afterthought which was never properly incorporated into the text (e.g. J.E.Powell, 'Notes on Herodotus', *CQ* 29 (1935), pp. 77ff., following earlier commentators).
- 15 The location of burials of sacred animals seems generally to have followed that of human interments. In the Late Period kings and priestly officials could be buried in temple precincts, and there is no reason whatsoever why the same should not have held true for some sacred animals.
- 16 The Karnak cache is well known (see G.Legrain, *Statues et statuettes de rois et de particuliers* (Catalogue général du Musée du Caire), I–III, Cairo, 1906–25. Another spectacular cache, containing stone sculpture of very high quality, came to light in the Luxor temple in 1989 (see 'The Luxor Cache', *Egyptian Archaeology* 2 (1992), pp. 8ff.).
- 17 For detailed discussion of all these passages see Lloyd, *Commentary* 99–182, ad loc.
- 18 Since the completion of my commentary, work has continued on the temple site to good effect: D.G.Jeffreys, *The Survey of Memphis*, I, *The Archaeological Report* (EES Occasional Papers 3), London, 1985; H.S.Smith and Jeffreys, 'The Survey of Memphis, 1983', *JEA* 71 (1985), pp. 5ff.; J.Malek, 'The monuments recorded by Alice Lieder in the "Temple of Vulcan" at Memphis in May 1853', *JEA* 72 (1986), pp. 101ff.; Smith and Jeffreys, 'A survey of Memphis', *Antiquity* 60 (1986), pp. 88ff.; Jeffreys, Malek and Smith, 'Memphis 1985', *JEA* 73 (1987), pp. 11ff.; Jeffreys and Malek, 'Memphis 1986, 1987', *JEA* 74 (1988), pp. 26ff.; Jeffreys and Smith, 'Memphis and the Nile in the New Kingdom: a preliminary attempt at a historical perspective', in A.-P.Zivie (ed.), *Memphis et ses nécropoles au Nouvel Empire. Nouvelles données, nouvelles questions* (Actes du Colloque International CNRS, Paris, 9 au 11 octobre 1986), Paris, 1988, pp. 55ff.; Smith, 'The Memphis project of the Egypt Exploration Society', *ibid.*, pp. 93ff.; L.Giddy, Jeffreys, and Malek, 'Memphis 1989', *JEA* 76 (1990), pp. 4ff.
- 19 This sad situation will quickly become clear even from a cursory reading of Jeffreys, *Survey*.
- 20 See Giddy *et al.*, op. cit., p. 4; Malek, op. cit., pp. 101ff.; Jeffreys *et al.*, op. cit., pp. 18ff.
- 21 In addition to references in Lloyd, op. cit., see also now Smith and Jeffreys, *JEA* 71, pp. 10ff.
- 22 Jeffreys and Malek, *JEA* 74, pp. 26ff.; Giddy, Jeffreys, and Malek, *JEA* 76, pp. 4ff.
- 23 In addition to Lloyd, loc. cit., see Smith and Jeffreys, *JEA* 71, pp. 8ff., who have recently found the names of Ramesses II, Merenptah, and Psammetikhos I in this area.
- 24 See preceding note.
- 25 M.Jones and A.Milward Jones, 'The Apis House project at Mit Rahinah: preliminary report of the second and third seasons, 1982–1983', *JARCE* 20 (1983), pp. 33ff.; id. and eadem, 'Apis expedition at Mit Rahinah. Preliminary report of the fourth season, 1984', *ibid.*, 22 (1985), pp. 17ff.; id. and eadem, 'The Apis House project at Mit Rahinah. Preliminary report of the fifth season, 1984–1985', *ibid.*, 24 (1987), pp. 35ff.; id. and eadem, 'The Apis House project at Mit Rahinah. Preliminary report of the sixth season, 1986', *ibid.*, 25 (1988), pp. 105ff.; id., 'The Temple of Apis in Memphis', *JEA* 76 (1990), pp. 141ff.
- 26 In addition to Lloyd, loc. cit., see Malek, op. cit., pp. 111ff.
- 27 See Jeffreys, op. cit., p. 37.
- 28 See Lloyd, loc. cit., for a detailed analysis. Lakes of the *išrw* type played an important ritual role in that their waters were regarded as capable of allaying and taming destructive and chaotic forces (see now B.Geßler-Löhr, *Die heiligen Seen ägyptischer*

Tempel. Ein Beitrag zur Deutung sakraler Baukunst im alten Ägypten (HÄB 21), Hildesheim, 1983, index, s.v. Isheru).

- 29 The hollow was created by the simple fact that the temple was of stone and, therefore, had a much better capacity for survival. The surrounding houses, however, were constructed of mud-brick and periodically collapsed. Others were then built on top so that the level of domestic settlement gradually rose whereas that of the temple did not. Several sites in Egypt still illustrate this phenomenon very clearly, e.g. Edfu and Esna.
- 30 Recent excavations on this site by the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut have concentrated on elucidating the prehistoric phase of the site's development and are of no help for our purposes.
- 31 According to Greek mythology Apollo and Artemis were born on Delos.
- 32 Inasmuch as this structure appears in a story which is patently fictitious, it is stretching a point to include it in our discussion, but it is worth mentioning since the description may still be reflecting Egyptian architectural practice, despite its dubious historicity.
- 33 For detailed discussion of the relevant passages see Lloyd, ad loc.
- 34 The connection is sometimes indirect, as in the discussion of the temple of Bubastis at II.138, and the description of the monuments of Sais at II.170: the first appears because its peculiar position was thought to illustrate Sesostri's mound-building activities, and the latter creeps in by association with the tombs of the kings of the Twenty-sixth Dynasty. On the other hand, Herodotus' comments on the temple of Amun at Thebes (II.74, 143.2) are an exception since they are made either in relation to his discussion of sacred animals or as part of an enquiry into chronological issues.

BEYOND THE POLIS

Women and economic opportunity in early Ptolemaic Egypt



Jane Rowlandson

From the perspective of historians most familiar with classical Athens, Hellenistic Egypt is apt to seem a haven of opportunity and privilege for women.¹ Even the briefest glance through the documents collected in the Loeb *Select Papyri* reveals women as active property owners, buying, selling and leasing all manner of property, or making or taking on loans, albeit normally with the presence of a male guardian, *kyrios*. In Lefkowitz and Fant's sourcebook on women throughout antiquity, the texts from Egypt provide a very different view of the lives of women from that in the earlier Greek sources.²

The contrast is certainly exaggerated by the change in character of our source material, from the creative literature (particularly drama) and lawcourt speeches which dominate the evidence from classical Greece, to routine administrative documents and actual legal contracts typical of the papyri from Egypt. It is also important to remember how extreme among Greek states Athens apparently was in denying legal rights to citizen women.³ And, as Foxhall has pointed out, the lack of independent status in law need not have deprived a well-dowered woman of economic influence exercised within the household.⁴ Moreover, the Hellenistic period saw wealthy women appear in many different parts of the Greek world, including some who made highly publicized contributions to the well-being of their city.⁵

Thus explanations offered for the contrast run the risk of explaining too much. But far from absolving us of further need for explanation, the more subtle and complex character of the contrast makes it all the more desirable to subject the considerable evidence for women's activities in early Hellenistic Egypt to thorough examination in order to identify as precisely as possible how far their formal rights and practical opportunities actually differed from those in other earlier Greek states, and to place this evidence in an explanatory framework.

In particular, it is important to look specifically at the early Ptolemaic period if we are to stand any chance of distinguishing autonomous developments among the immigrant community from the influence of the native Egyptian legal tradition, which was notably more favourable to women than was any form of Greek law.⁶ For by the second century BC, intermarriage and social mobility make it increasingly difficult to define who the 'real' Greeks were; many 'Greeks' patently had predominantly Egyptian ancestry, and sometimes, at least, behaved according to Egyptian cultural norms.⁷

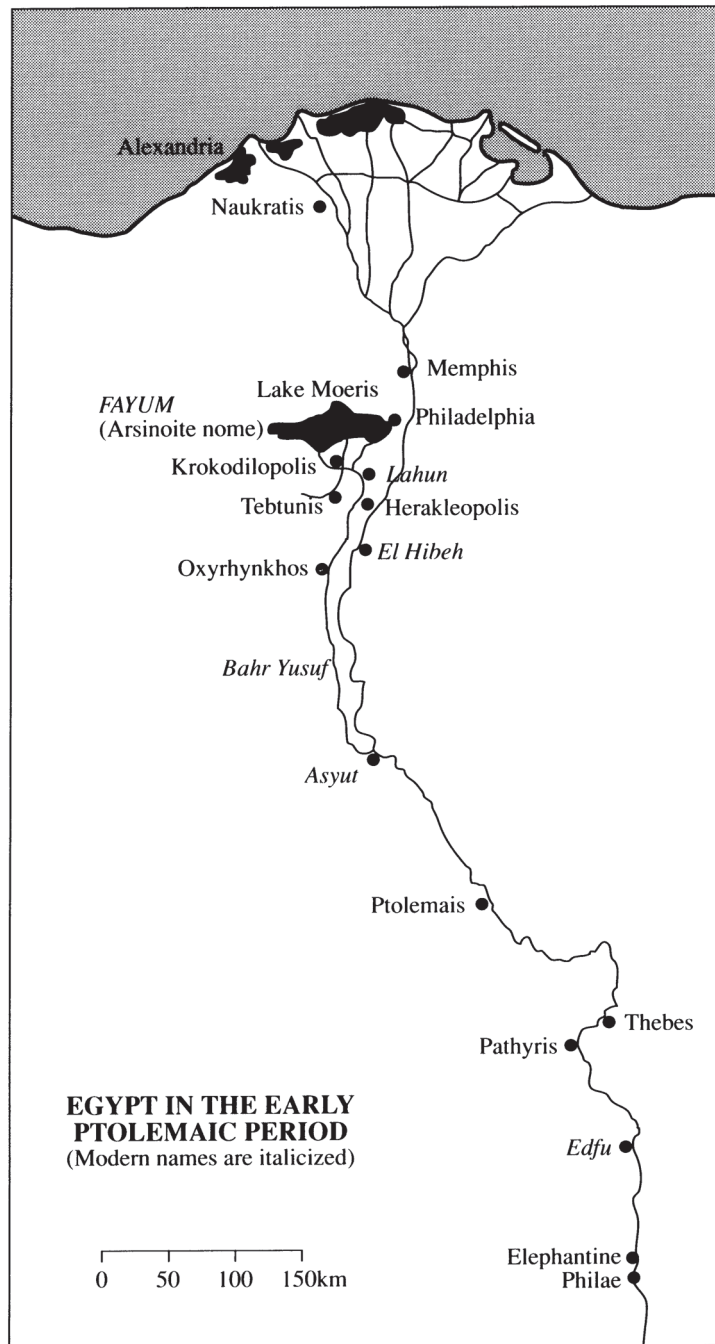


Figure 13.1 Map of Egypt in the Early Ptolemaic period.

Traditional Egyptian law permitted women to act independently, without the presence of any male. The rules of intestate inheritance apportioned to female heirs the same share as to all males except an eldest son; and the property rights of married women were strongly protected under the various forms of marriage arrangement.⁸ Thus throughout the Ptolemaic period, contracts written in Egyptian (in the difficult cursive script known as ‘demotic’) reveal women in possession of substantial amounts of property, which they administered or disposed of in their own right.

To illustrate this point, one early third-century BC example from an archive found at Thebes in Upper Egypt must suffice.⁹ In the winter of 290/89, a woman named Tahib daughter of Petenefhotep made a legal agreement with her neighbour, Pleehe son of Thetartais, to allow her to build a house adjoining the west wall of his own house in Thebes, leaving enough space for a light-well opposite the two windows in his wall. The document containing this agreement (which was witnessed by sixteen witnesses), and indeed the whole archive of texts among which it was found, illustrates the sophistication of Egyptian law at the start of the Ptolemaic period. The new rulers of the country allowed this system to coexist with the newly introduced law derived from Greek models, producing two parallel but initially quite distinct legal systems, each with its own judges, which gradually came to exert an influence on each other.

Egyptian tradition unquestionably had a significant impact on women’s legal position in the later Ptolemaic and Roman periods. In this essay, however, I wish to put this into perspective by concentrating on evidence which shows the extent of economic opportunity and activity among women within the colonial communities during the period when they were still relatively unaffected by Egyptian influence. The period covered may be taken for convenience as ending at the death of Ptolemy IV in 204 BC; for reasons explained below, evidence becomes plentiful only from the 260s.

THE CONTEXT: WOMEN AND THE GREEK-MACEDONIAN COLONIAL SETTLEMENT OF EGYPT

If quantification of the scale of male Greek immigration into Egypt poses severe difficulties because of the inadequacy of our evidence, it is quite impossible to document the extent of women’s participation in this process.¹⁰ Nevertheless, this should not deter us from attempting both to define the limits of what we do know and within these limits to consider the range of possibilities.

Greeks had inhabited Egypt since the archaic period, with the foundation of Naukratis in the seventh century BC as a port of trade (later acquiring the status of a fully-fledged *polis*), and the employment of Greek and Karian mercenaries by Pharaohs from Psammetikhos I (664–610) onwards. Although the traders and mercenaries would themselves be men, the permanent and self-reproducing nature of these communities requires the presence of women among them. How far the initial female population was brought from overseas, and how far from the surrounding indigenous communities, we have really no basis for judging. Subsequent generations presumably could have been reproduced through in-marriage. Endogamy was in any case normal within Greek *poleis*, except among the aristocracy.

By the fifth century, the great Egyptian city of Memphis numbered many Greeks among its several immigrant communities, again probably attracted there by the possibilities for trade or manufacture. Inter-marriage with other ethnic groups may have been more likely in such a cosmopolitan city, but was not so pervasive as to obliterate the separate identity of the 'Hellenomemphites'. One of the earliest Greek papyri from Egypt preserves an invocation by a woman who probably belonged to this community: Artemisia daughter of Amasis begged 'Oserapis' and the other gods to curse her husband for not properly carrying out the burial of their daughter.¹¹

Alexander the Great's acquisition of Egypt from the Persians in the winter of 332/1, and his foundation of the coastal city of Alexandria, laid the basis for a new, and vastly more significant, phase of Greek immigration into Egypt; but after Alexander's death at Babylon in June 323, it fell to one of his generals, Ptolemy son of Lagos, to carry out this policy. Ptolemy's immediate need was for a large and effective Graeco-Macedonian army to deploy against his rivals in the bitter 'Wars of the Successors' which gradually dismembered the empire briefly created by Alexander. He bought the loyalty of his troops (and attracted those of his rivals) with grants of land allotments, *kleroi*, in the Egyptian countryside, the *khora*. The soldiers also received accommodation by dividing the houses of the native Egyptians for use as billets (*stathmoi*). This positive encouragement to settle permanently in Egypt, along with their wives and families, thus transformed a couple of generations of professional soldiers into the core of an enduring Hellenized colonial elite.¹²

Meanwhile Alexandria developed rapidly into the greatest commercial city of the Greek world, exploiting its superb position with harbours linking the Nile valley to the Mediterranean. Despite attracting Egyptian and non-Greek (notably Jewish) immigrant inhabitants, it remained an essentially Greek city, its civic structure and legal system modelled on those of Athens, and with an exclusive citizen body drawn from other Greek and Macedonian communities.

It is generally assumed that Alexandrian women were of as impeccably Hellenic stock as their menfolk;¹³ and our patchy knowledge suggests that this is at least substantially correct. However, careful juxtaposition of Greek and demotic texts has recently brought to light one probable case of inter-marriage between an Alexandrian citizen living in the *khora* and an Egyptian woman;¹⁴ and perhaps we should not rule out the possibility that descendants of such a marriage might be accepted and enrolled as full Alexandrian citizens. It is difficult to believe that a new and rapidly expanding *polis* could enforce such a total ban on exogamy as Athens attempted to do (without total success) after 451/0 BC. The essential criterion for acceptance, even in Alexandria, was probably cultural rather than strictly ethnic.

Only one other Greek *polis* was founded in Egypt during the Hellenistic period: Ptolemy I¹⁵ established Ptolemais in Upper (i.e. southern) Egypt as a counterweight to priest-dominated Thebes. The population of Ptolemais was again predominantly drawn from other Greek cities, and it preserved its Greek identity through, and beyond, the Ptolemaic period. We know almost nothing about it in the third century BC; but by the end of the Ptolemaic period, it was large enough to be compared in size with Memphis.¹⁶

There were also large numbers of civilian immigrants to the *khora*: agricultural entrepreneurs, moneylenders, tax-farmers and officials. These, and their families,

become well documented only with the ‘explosion’ in numbers of Greek papyri from the 260s BC, but many of them do seem to be recent arrivals at that time.

Thus we must envisage the Greek and Macedonian colonial population in Egypt as comprising several distinct groups, with differing degrees of female participation in each. On the one hand, we have the *poleis*, Alexandria and Ptolemais, whose citizen population, both male and female, was, and remained through the generations, predominantly (if not entirely) Graeco-Macedonian. On the other hand, we have the immigrants to the *khora* in two distinct phases: military settlers mostly under Ptolemy I, followed by civilian entrepreneurs mainly in the reign of his son, Ptolemy II (283–246). The nomenclature and ethnic designations of many of the women associated with these groups suggest an immigrant Greek origin, too; but intermarriage with the local families among whom they lived was certainly practised from the start, and seems to have become progressively more common.

The question of intermarriage between the Greeks and Egyptians living in the *khora* is of absolutely fundamental importance to our understanding of the processes of social change and cultural accommodation in Ptolemaic society, but as yet there seems no evidence on which to form a reliable assessment of its frequency. The third-century census documents, currently undergoing thorough re-edition and analysis by W.Clarysse and D.J.Thompson, may ultimately help to provide a solution; even on a first reading, they yield interesting demographic insights.¹⁷

Meanwhile, it helps to set out some likely alternatives. We should remember that the colonial settlers mostly came, not as discrete and displaced individuals, but in groups, retaining links among themselves and with their cities of origin, in addition to forming fresh links with their new neighbours and associates. Some immigrants do seem to have arrived in family groups, or soon sent for their families from their home cities; this in turn would provide a supply of brides for younger male immigrants. But there is nevertheless likely to have been an imbalance between males and females in the first colonial generation.

In terms of sheer numbers, then, Alexandria alone could well account for half the total immigrant female population in Egypt; and certainly it seems likely that the three *poleis* (Alexandria, Ptolemais and Naukratis) account for significantly more Greek women than were settled throughout the entire *khora*.¹⁸ However, the survival of the papyri means that the women of the *khora* are disproportionately well documented. Third-century evidence relating to Ptolemais and Naukratis is negligible, and that concerning Alexandria, although varied and highly picturesque, offers a wholly different perspective from the mundane documentation of the *khora*.

The opportunities which Alexandria presented for women will therefore be treated briefly in the following section, before progressing to a more detailed analysis of what the Greek papyri tell us about the economic roles open to Greek women in the *khora*.

WOMEN IN ALEXANDRIA

In Egypt, there is everything that exists anywhere in the world: wealth, gymnasia, power, peace, fame, sights, philosophers, gold, young men, the Shrine of the Sibling Gods, a good King, the Museum, wine—all the

good things one could want. And women—more of them, I swear by the daughter of Hades, than heaven boasts stars—and their looks, like the goddesses who once induced Paris to judge their beauty!

(Herodas, *Mimes* I, lines 26–35)

This extract comes from one of several Alexandrian poems which dramatize women's conversation. Their lighthearted tone makes a welcome contrast to the doom-bringing women of Athenian tragedy: here an Athenian procuress tries to persuade her younger compatriot to forget the lover who has gone to seek his fortune in Egypt; while the famous *Idyll* 15 of Theokritos gently parodies the chatter of middle-class Alexandrian women at a festival.

But none of these poems offers any suggestion that Alexandria presented types of opportunity not available in old Greece, where women, however respectable and prosperous, attended festivals, and no doubt gossiped about their husbands. Moreover, the opportunities listed in the Herodas *Mime* were available not to the abandoned *hetaira*, but to her male ex-lover. There are indeed historical cases of *hetairai* seeking new opportunities in Egypt (Ptolemy II Philadelphos was notorious for his mistresses); but this was hardly a novel role for Greek women prepared to abandon the respectability of citizen marriage.¹⁹

One feature of Alexandria absent from the cities of classical Greece (though not from Macedon) was the presence of a royal court. Royal women were essential components of the 'public image' of Ptolemaic monarchy, serving to consolidate and legitimate its dynastic element. The key initial steps were taken under Ptolemy II Philadelphos, who inaugurated a cult of his parents as the 'Saviour Gods' (*Theoi Soteres*), as well as assimilating the *Theoi Adelphoi* (the 'Sibling Gods': Ptolemy II himself and his sister/wife Arsinoe) with the cult of Alexander. After her death, Arsinoe herself also became an important, and apparently genuinely popular, goddess. Subsequent developments continued to draw attention to the women of the dynasty; for instance, the Canopus Decree (238 BC) preserves in detail arrangements for the Egyptian cult of Berenike, the prematurely deceased daughter of Ptolemy III Euergetes.²⁰

As Pomeroy has pointed out,²¹ the consequent opportunity for Alexandrian women to serve as eponymous priestesses of the various royal goddesses—the sole public office open to women within the city—again reproduced a traditional role for women within the Greek *polis*. The naming of priestesses in dating formulas, combined with other prosopographical data (particularly inscriptions from the extensive overseas empire developed by the first three Ptolemies), allows us to see how women offered marriage links between different families at the highest level of Alexandrian society; but this role, too, was traditional and universal among the aristocratic families of Greece, not to mention within the Macedonian kingdom.

Mistresses, priestesses, forgers of marriage links: all were entirely traditional roles for Greek women, easily paralleled from classical Athenian evidence. There is unfortunately no direct evidence for the legal rights of Alexandrian women until the start of the Roman period, when a surviving group of Alexandrian legal contracts shows women, acting with their *kyrioi*, as property owners and parties to the contracts.²² We also know that in the Roman period, Alexandrian women were debarred from making a

will.²³ In these respects, it is unlikely that the law had changed since the original constitution set up on the city's foundation; probably, therefore, the women of early Ptolemaic Alexandria possessed rights of property ownership and disposal beyond those possessed by fifth- and fourth-century Athenian women, although possibly not beyond those attested for some other Greek cities.²⁴

But trade, the major source of Alexandria's wealth, is so inadequately documented that we have no idea of the extent of women's involvement, except for the attestation of a few women of the royal family and court as owners of Nile grain barges.²⁵ The ordinary female shopkeepers and traders of Alexandria have left no more record than their counterparts in Athens.

THE GREEK PAPYRUS DOCUMENTS: A MALE PERSPECTIVE?

We owe our relative abundance of information on Hellenistic Egypt not only to the bureaucratic nature of that society, but also more fortuitously to the dry Egyptian climate, which preserved papyrus documents in large numbers (often reused as mummy wrappings). But it is crucial to remember just how patchy, chronologically and geographically, this information is: whole areas of Egypt, most significantly the Delta, are almost totally undocumented.²⁶ The vast majority of early Ptolemaic Greek documents emanate from a limited region: the Herakleopolite and Oxyrhynkhite nomes (administrative districts) in the northern Nile valley just south of Memphis; and the Fayum, a depression adjoining the Nile valley and irrigated by Nile water fed into the region by an ancient channel (the Bahr Yusuf) which branches off the Nile near Asyut and runs along the west side of the valley until entering the Fayum by the Lahun gap. Manipulation of this water supply and improvements to the canal system within the Fayum under Ptolemies I and II facilitated particularly intensive Greek settlement and agricultural development in this region, which was renamed the *Arsinoite nome* after Ptolemy II Philadelphos' sister and wife, Arsinoe. The Herakleopolite and Oxyrhynkhite nomes were also subject to extensive settlement and economic development over the same period.

Since my purpose here is to look specifically at the role of women within the immigrant population, the bias of our documentation towards areas of intensive colonial development matters less than it would for some other lines of enquiry, particularly if we bear in mind that equivalent economic change was probably affecting parts of the Delta too, whereas the impact of Ptolemaic rule on Upper Egypt took a somewhat different form.²⁷ But it is important to realize a further limitation on our documentation: the administrative texts which dominate the Greek papyrological evidence of the early Ptolemaic period start to appear only *circa* 270 BC. This seems to be the result, not of the chances of survival, but of a substantive administrative change; the structure of the bureaucracy was reorganized (incorporating native Egyptian traditions of scribal administration), and henceforth the main administrative records were kept in Greek. Greek historians can only be grateful for this change; but we do have to remember that over half a century of Ptolemaic rule in Egypt had passed before the administrative records we typically associate with it began to be kept.²⁸

Nevertheless, the mid-third-century papyri clearly document a society of new immigrants rather than of established colonials. This is most obvious from the 'Zenon archive', the collection of some two thousand letters, accounts and other documents concerning the activities of Zenon of Kaunos (in Karia: the south-west tip of Asia Minor), particularly his management of the 10,000-aroura²⁹ 'gift-estate' at Philadelphia granted by Ptolemy II to his finance minister, Apollonios.³⁰ Zenon retained important links with his home, as well as with other Karian immigrants to Egypt (Karia was itself part of the Ptolemaic empire at this time). Yet women are mentioned very rarely in this huge collection of texts: we know of Zenon's brothers, even about his dog;³¹ but have no idea whether he was married, or about any other female relative or friend. Some of Zenon's associates had wives; they dutifully provided the men with clothing.³² We also hear of *betairai*,³³ as well as a few other working women; particularly lower-class Egyptians and other nationalities.³⁴ The contemporary archive of Kleon the irrigation engineer preserves an anxious letter from his wife Metrodora, expressing fright at the king's displeasure with her husband;³⁵ nothing could convey more graphically how dependent a colonial wife was on her husband's success.

Substantial portions of the third-century Greek papyrus documentation, both the Zenon archive and other collections of papyri from the Fayum and elsewhere,³⁶ could appropriately be described as 'gendered'; that is, they are disproportionately concerned with essentially masculine activities, such as the allocation, draining, cultivation and finally taxation of land. Women were liable to certain personal taxes, particularly the salt tax, and appear in the relevant lists; but their absence from the bulk of administrative documentation stands in marked contrast to their later prominence in the records of the Roman administration of Egypt.

In some other types of early Ptolemaic document, however, women have a higher profile. Depositions by witnesses in legal disputes are regrettably very rare, but show clearly that, in contrast to the Athenian lawcourt speeches, men freely referred to women by name, and acknowledged that they had seen them—even that they worked alongside them.³⁷ Petitions survive in large numbers; the collection known as *P.Entreuxis* includes a small but not negligible proportion of petitions submitted by women. Like the male petitioners, these included both Greeks and Egyptians, and the subject-matter was not notably different from those submitted by men. To petition the king or other powerful personages was alien to the egalitarian ethos of a Greek city, but had precedents in both the Pharaonic and Macedonian royal systems. Legal contracts, as well as rolls of contract abstracts, have also survived in quantity, and offer useful information about women's economic behaviour.

From this brief review of types of papyrus documentation, it would appear that, even in the Egyptian countryside beyond the confines of the Greek *polis*, there were certain areas of 'public' life (primarily the administration), in which women scarcely figured. However, they were neither in principle nor in practice excluded from the law, nor from seeking the direct assistance of the king or his representatives. In comparison with any earlier Greek society, the documentation of women in early Ptolemaic Egypt is unquestionably lavish. We must now turn to consider in more detail what this evidence shows about the areas of economic activity open to women.

ACCESS TO LAND

In a Greek *polis*, productive land was normally for the most part privately owned. Ownership was restricted to citizens of that polis; and, although sale to other citizens was legally permitted, most land was probably kept within families, passing to the next generation according to the rules of inheritance. Thus in *poleis* where the law permitted female inheritance and property ownership, productive land could pass into the ownership of women. This certainly seems to have been the case in fourth-century Sparta, whose decline Aristotle notoriously blamed on the large size of dowries and the widespread control of land by women.³⁸

Presumably the arrangements for the territory of the Greek *poleis* of Egypt, Naukratis, Alexandria and Ptolemais, each of which possessed its own legal system, also allowed for extensive private landownership, although there is actually very little evidence with which to confirm this.³⁹ But outside these cities, the tenure of land was organized on a fundamentally different basis. Instead of private landownership, articulated through a civic legal system, productive land in Ptolemaic Egypt was held under essentially conditional tenures from the crown; and access to the possession of land depended on an individual's position or function within the state.⁴⁰

For instance, vast tracts of land, particularly in Upper Egypt, were allocated for the benefit of the temples of Egyptian cults. Egyptian temples were themselves major economic centres of both production and distribution, which functioned primarily on 'redistributive' principles (in Polanyian terminology, which is particularly appropriate in this context),⁴¹ so that the benefits of the temple's economic resources and activities were confined to its priests and their families. At the level of the individual beneficiaries, the capital resources pertaining to the temple (not only productive land, but also buildings, tombs and 'holy days': the revenue to the temple in offerings on certain days) were in effective private possession, and could not only be inherited within the priestly families, but were also in some sense open to the operation of a 'market' through purchase and sale, although again in practice at least restricted to the same small circle of families. In the hierarchy of temple personnel, women had a place, albeit usually a relatively lowly one; through their families, they were also in a position to inherit lucrative temple resources, including arable land. From the Thebaid, the area of great temple estates, come many documents, written initially in demotic, later in Greek too, which show women possessing arable land as well as other types of property, and participating freely in buying, selling and leasing it.⁴²

However, it is misleading to consider any of these women as 'Greeks' in the sense required by this study, even when they are described as such, or have Greek (usually in addition to Egyptian) names. The garrisons of royal troops near Thebes in the aftermath of the great rebellion of the Thebaid between 207 and 186 BC provided opportunities for social mobility through Hellenization, while soldiers of immigrant descent married into prosperous local families; the marriage of Dryton, a citizen of Ptolemais, to Apollonia alias Senmonthis, of a well-to-do Hellenizing Egyptian family from Pathyris, provides the classic instance of this phenomenon.⁴³ So far as we can tell, only intermarriage (which was probably more common between a Greek man and an Egyptian woman than the other way round) gave the descendants of the

Greek immigrants to Egypt access to the status which allowed possession of valuable temple land.

The other main status groups granted access to productive land tended by their very nature to exclude women. The royal farmers, *basilikoi georgoi*, who cultivated the substantial areas of royal land, paying a rent direct to the king, were with very few exceptions male.⁴⁴ This seems to have been particularly true of those parts of Egypt which experienced most radical intervention in landholdings under early Ptolemaic rule: the Arsinoite, Herakleopolite and Oxyrhynchite nomes.

The Ptolemaic policy of making land grants to soldiers and officials inevitably confined direct access to this land to men, although wives and daughters would of course benefit indirectly from the wealth these estates generated. *Kleroi* varied in size from 100 arouras downwards, while 'gift-estates' (*doreai*) were much larger, 10,000 arouras or more. Until almost the last generation of Ptolemaic rule in Egypt, there is no evidence of female relatives being officially recognized as having any rights over any of this land. The *doreai* never seem to have become in any sense heritable, even by male heirs, being revoked by the king as officials died or fell from favour. However, even as early as the mid-third century, sons regularly succeeded to their father's *kleroi* if they were themselves in a position to take on the military role of a *kleruch*. As we shall see in the following section, wills surviving from the third century BC show that *kleruchs* (among others) could bequeath property of various sorts to their wives and daughters, but their *kleroi* seem to have been excluded. Only in the middle of the first century BC do we first find a woman officially certified as succeeding to her father's *kleros*, 'because he had no male progeny'.⁴⁵ By that date, there is other evidence of quite extensive possession of *kleruchic* land by women.⁴⁶

However, even in the third century, women are occasionally found administering *kleroi*, perhaps on behalf of an absent husband or orphaned son, or in other unspecified capacities.⁴⁷ Two cases are particularly interesting, although unfortunately neither can be proved to concern *kleruchic* land because of lacunae in the texts. Among the Hibeh papyri is a fragmentary lease of land by a woman named Kleopatra to Eupolis (probably a local official), apparently for a rent of 30 artabas of wheat paid in advance. The arrangement was thus an antichretic loan, the creditor receiving use of the land in lieu of repayment. Kleopatra had to repay the 30 artabas or its monetary equivalent only in the event of the land being taken back by the King.⁴⁸ In the other instance, Kalliste daughter of Paramonos leased out arable land to a group of men who seem to have specialized in managing *kleruchs*' landholdings and acting as their creditors.⁴⁹ Her son, a soldier of Philon's troop, was her *kyrios*: since he was clearly both an adult and available in person, one wonders why not he but Kalliste was acting as lessor of the land.

Many *kleruchs* leased out their land: some perhaps simply from preference, but others apparently because they lacked capital to exploit their land to full advantage. Many tenants have been plausibly identified as civilian immigrant entrepreneurs stepping in to supply the necessary capital in addition to finding labour (normally that of Egyptians)—at considerable financial advantage to themselves.⁵⁰ If at first sight it is wholly unsurprising that women are not found in this entrepreneurial capacity, it is worth reflecting that the dowries of married women constituted useful concentrations of capital which might have been profitably deployed for such a purpose.

Thus, with rare exceptions, any dealings that women had with kleruchic land in the early Ptolemaic period were marginal and informal, depending on the woman's relationship to a man, and unprotected by official sanction or written contract. In view of the picture often presented of Ptolemaic Egypt as allowing women notably more favourable rights over property than classical Athens had done, it should be emphasized that possession of the very extensive and lucrative category of kleruchic land was, as a consequence of its exclusion from the inheritance system, completely denied to women except via male relatives for almost the entire Ptolemaic period. It was indeed a major change when at the start of Roman rule this land became private property, alienable by both inheritance and sale, and we regularly find women acquiring and disposing of it.⁵¹

Under the Ptolemies, it seems that only land regarded as in some respect marginal to the main productive capacity of the country was classed as 'privately owned' (*idioktetos*) and allowed to pass by inheritance and sale. This applied particularly to vineyards and orchards, since they were often initially planted on unproductive land, and were in any case taxed separately from the bulk of productive arable land, which was taxed in kind. Although vines were grown in pre-Ptolemaic Egypt, the immigrants' preference for wine over the native barley beer led to a rapid expansion of vine production, including the enthusiastic importation of Greek varieties of stock well-documented in the Zenon correspondence.⁵² Vineyards required capital outlay for several years before they became productive; also the taxes on wine, as on other 'manufactured' agricultural produce, were collected not directly but by a newly introduced system of tax-farming. In general, therefore, vine-growing formed part of the new, 'Greek', monetized sector of the Ptolemaic economy.⁵³

The entire revenue of the *apomoira*, the main tax on vineyards and orchards, was diverted by Ptolemy Philadelphos to fund the cult of his deified sister-wife Arsinoe. Royal women also profited from vineyards in their human capacity: a payment of 80 drachmas was made through the bank at Krokodilopolis, the metropolis of the Arsinoite nome, for the provision of twenty mattocks for a vineyard at Hephaistias belonging to Berenike, daughter of either Ptolemy II or Ptolemy III.⁵⁴ At a lower social level, vineyards and orchards are occasionally found in the possession of Greek or other immigrant women. For instance, a Jewish woman, Philoumene, leased out part of her orchard at Samaria to her former son-in-law for four years.⁵⁵ Among over thirty lease-abstracts from Tebtunis covering the years 228–221 BC, one involved the lease of an orchard from a woman.⁵⁶

THE TRANSMISSION OF WEALTH TO WOMEN THROUGH INHERITANCE AND DOWRY

In Ptolemaic Egypt, as elsewhere throughout the Greek world, property was transmitted to subsequent generations primarily through intestate inheritance, supplemented by the practice of granting dowries at daughters' marriages. Greek cities differed one from another in the precise regulations for intestate succession, although all practised partible inheritance; they also seem to have differed in the circumstances under which citizens were allowed to make a will. For instance, at Athens, Solon is said to

have introduced the facility for a man without sons (or without legitimate children?²—the Greek word '*apais*' is ambiguous) to make a will leaving his property to whomsoever he wished; it has been argued that even by the end of the classical period, Athenian testamentary rights remained restricted to men without male heirs.⁵⁷

In Ptolemaic Egypt, intestate inheritance tended not to generate written documentation unless something went wrong, necessitating a petition or a lawsuit.⁵⁸ Thus, in reconstructing the principles of inheritance, we are reduced to piecing together cases from widely disparate dates and places within Egypt, with little allowance for the possibility of significant change during the early generations of settlement and intermarriage, except a progressive development of Egyptian influence.⁵⁹ Daughters probably possessed inheritance rights even in the presence of male offspring; widows, however, do not seem to have had intestate rights to any of their husbands' property, apart from the return of their dowry.

Testamentary dispositions are better attested, since they necessarily involved the writing and preservation of a document. The earliest surviving Greek will comes from Elephantine in 285/4, by which a Temnian bequeathed all his property to his wife Kallista (also a Temnian).⁶⁰ But a better basis for generalization is provided by an extensive series of wills, made by both kleruchs and civilian immigrants in the Arsinoite nome, among the papyri excavated by Flinders Petrie, and recently subjected to thorough re-edition.⁶¹ Of fifty-three such wills, it is interesting that at least twenty-five mention women among the legatees, including wives and unrelated females as well as daughters. This, and the general variety of the legacies, suggests that written wills normally did not serve merely to confirm the rules of intestate inheritance, but to make provisions which would not be covered by these general practices.⁶² The frequent provision for wives possibly suggests that these women possessed neither blood relatives to return to nor substantial property in their own right.⁶³

Kleruchs sometimes specifically included bequest of their *stathmos*, the billet which each kleruch received from the Crown. For instance the 75-year-old Antipatros, a Cyrenean kleruch, bequeathed: 'all my [possessions] and the billet which I have in Alabanthis in the Herakleides district, to my wife Dionysia...I leave nothing to [anyone] else.'⁶⁴ In another will, a billet was probably bequeathed to the kleruch's daughter.⁶⁵ Other testators left their possessions to women whose relationship to them is not stated.⁶⁶

Apart from the *stathmos* (and horse and armour, which were never left to women), the kleruchs' wills tend to be unspecific about the character of the property bequeathed, using the general term '*hyparkhonta*', 'possessions'. But some mentioned houses, slaves, contracts or 'claims'. The most detailed legacy of property to a woman is the will of Maron son of Euphranor, who bequeathed to Mysta, a Rhodian woman, a 'sanctuary of the mother of gods Berenike, and of Aphrodite Arsinoe' and the holdings facing it; and to Meneia, an Alexandrian woman, part of a courtyard and the adjacent property.⁶⁷

As often with the papyrus evidence, the Petrie wills offer a momentarily intense perception of a single aspect of life in a particular community, not an ideal basis for generalization. But these testators (all of whom were men) are unlikely to have been unique in their concern that women, whether wives, daughters or others, should share in their wealth after their decease.

No wills made by women survive from the Ptolemaic period, although female testators become quite common after Egypt's incorporation into the Roman Empire. Clarysse, the editor of the Petrie wills, suggests that 'it would be rash to conclude from this that women in Ptolemaic Egypt had no right to dispose by will.'⁶⁸ Bearing in mind that Alexandrian women remained debarred from making a will even during the Roman period, it is on balance more likely that they had always differed in this respect from their counterparts in the *khora* than that the women of the *khora* acquired under the Romans a privilege not extended to Alexandrians.⁶⁹ Thus the absence of Ptolemaic wills by women may reflect the relative paucity of valuable property in female hands.

The result of inheritance practice, both testate and intestate, was to ensure that in so far as property was privately owned, a significant proportion of it came into the hands of women. This property encompassed houses, including the *stathmoi* allocated to kleruchs, personal moveables and 'privately owned' land, particularly vineyards and orchards. However, among the immigrant population women would rarely have the chance to inherit arable land, until intermarriage blurred the distinction between Greeks and Egyptians and gave the descendants of immigrants access to land from the Egyptian temple estates.

The extent of female inheritance is also affected by dowry-giving, since presumably the value of a dowry already received would be deducted from a daughter's inheritance portion. But while an inheritance might typically consist of buildings or other property, dowries consisted only of coin or personal possessions.⁷⁰ It is difficult to compare the worth of dowries with that of houses or other commodities, because of apparent inconsistencies in the relative price of basic commodities in the Ptolemaic period; in particular, garments seem as valuable as houses, and prices for both fluctuate widely.⁷¹ As far as we can tell, dowries in this period would be worth no less than a girl with siblings might expect to inherit. An only daughter presumably inherited as well as receiving a dowry; and we should also remember that one might inherit from uncles and other relatives as well as from one's own parents.⁷²

Not only fathers, but also mothers, might provide the dowry.⁷³ Documents in fact often speak of the dowry as brought by the bride herself, not given on her behalf (*'epi'*), sometimes even when her father was present as her *kyrios*.⁷⁴ The precise words should not be pressed too strongly, but seem to reflect a perception of the dowry as essentially the bride's contribution to the marital establishment, granted temporarily and conditionally to her husband (and partly functioning as a guarantee of both parties' good behaviour), but ultimately her property.

Thus the receipt of a dowry does not appear to have reduced the total value of the wealth transmitted to females; it might, however, increase the proportion of it in the form of money as opposed to other property.

WOMEN AND FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS

Ptolemies I and II were essentially responsible for introducing monetization to Egypt. Although sectors of the economy, most importantly the production of cereals, remained unmonetized (taxes on cereal crops were collected almost entirely in kind), the need

to pay capitation taxes in money must have involved the entire population in the use of money at least at a minimal level. Money taxes were also levied on trades, and on some categories of agricultural activity, including pasturage and fruit-growing. Private capital was employed to underwrite the system of tax collection, guaranteeing the state a predictable return, but also allowing the tax-farmers a chance of profiting from good years. The tax-farmers do not appear to have included women.⁷⁵

A network of banks operated under royal control, handling both payments to and by the state and transactions between private individuals.⁷⁶ Women are also not found in the list of bankers.⁷⁷ Yet at a more informal and humble level, we know that women acted as pawnbrokers; one late third-century letter enjoins the recipient to: 'Go along...to the money-lending woman and get the necklet and the muslin at 1,200 drachmas, and pay the interest...'⁷⁸

Women were able to make substantial purchases or sales, such as the 750 measures of wine purchased in advance (either as a concealed loan, or a form of speculation) by Olympias, a married Macedonian woman, for 3,000 copper drachmas.⁷⁹ Some loans of money made by women have been thought to conceal outright payments for services,⁸⁰ perhaps so as to guarantee the transaction more effectively. But the reasons for which women lent out or borrowed money in the third century must have varied as much as the circumstances of the transactions.⁸¹ The legal capacity of women to participate in loans was not always to their personal advantage, particularly when their role was to provide additional security for a male relative's debt.⁸²

On the other hand, the availability of official backing gave effective assistance to women in enforcing their claims.⁸³ This is clearly shown in one case of 239 BC, where a woman used the court of the *Khrematistai* to enforce the sequestration of a vineyard, which she then acquired, along with a house, gatehouse and bath-house. It is particularly interesting that the woman, Theroy's daughter of Nechtathymis, was Egyptian, yet she took the action to the Greek court, where she needed a *kyrios*, rather than to the Egyptian court of the *Laokritai*.⁸⁴ She appears as a relatively early beneficiary of the Ptolemaic policy of cultural *laissez-faire*: individuals were permitted to operate in whichever cultural or legal sphere they found most advantageous.

CONCLUSION

The early Ptolemies' specific need was for male settlers from the Graeco-Macedonian world to fill their armies and administer their territories. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that they directed exclusively at men the policies designed to attract immigrants by offering avenues to wealth: tenure of land conditional on military or government service, and chances of profitable investment in tax-farming contracts or in banking. Thus the early Ptolemaic state was certainly no less structured for men's benefit than was any Greek *polis*.

Initially the women who accompanied the male immigrants, whether *betairai* or wives and daughters, shared only indirectly in these opportunities for prosperity. In so far as the opportunities resulted in a permanent accumulation of heritable property or money, some of this wealth filtered down to women through inheritance, dowries and

monetary transactions. Moreover, the wills offer an important demonstration of the early immigrants' wish to place in female hands wealth and property significantly beyond what these women would have acquired simply by intestate inheritance. Thus subsequent generations saw a gradual but steady accumulation of wealth in women's possession. However, a significant brake on the extension of female property ownership persisted until the first century BC in the continued association of kleruchic land with military service.

In other contexts, however, the legal capacity of Greek women in the *khora* to make valid contracts (accompanied by their *kyrioi*) opened to them a range of economic activities, even allowing them to seek redress in the courts. Social convention probably still inhibited many women from pursuing economic gain too vigorously; the proportion of transactions which involve women is fairly small, and it was especially rare for women to undertake to lease land. But opportunities were there for the few individuals who chose to exploit them, both Greek and Egyptian.

In fact there was much common ground between the immigrants and Egyptians in attitudes to female property-ownership and economic activity, a factor which must have considerably eased the integration of the two communities. Inter-marriage between Egyptian propertied families and the Graeco-Macedonian ruling class raised issues of cultural (and legal) compatibility precisely in the areas of dowry, inheritance and female property ownership; but far from producing obvious tensions, the outcome seems merely to have been a further boost to the status of women as propertyholders in the 'Greek' sphere, as they were able to combine the most advantageous aspects of each tradition. Thus by the second century, women whose Egyptian ancestry had brought them possession of temple land, 'holy days' or other property, could dispose of them using Greek deeds (although often preferring the protection of an Egyptian marriage document). Such cases account for a large proportion of later Ptolemaic property transactions involving women, and colour our overall assessment of women's economic role in Hellenistic Egypt.⁸⁵ As Ptolemaic Egypt matured from a newly colonial state where material rewards depended primarily on direct service to the king, towards a longer established multi-cultural society based increasingly on private property, the economic opportunities for women, whatever their ethnic origin, appear to have expanded.

NOTES

- 1 I wish to thank for their numerous helpful comments and references: Anton Powell, Elizabeth Redgate, Michael Roberts, and especially Dorothy Thompson.
- 2 A.S.Hunt and C.C.Edgar (trans.), *Select Papyri*, vols I and II (Cambridge, Mass., 1932–7); M.R.Lefkowitz and M.B.Fant, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome* (London, 1982).
- 3 D.Schaps, *The Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece* (Edinburgh, 1979).
- 4 Lin Foxhall, 'Household, gender and property in Classical Athens', CQ 39 (1989), 22–44.
- 5 Riet van Bremen, 'Women and wealth', in A.Cameron and A.Kuhr (eds), *Images of Women in Antiquity* (London, 1983), 223–42.

- 6 On all aspects of women's life in pre-Ptolemaic Egypt, see G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt* (London, 1993).
- 7 K. Goudriaan, *Ethnicity in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Amsterdam, 1988). W. Clarysse, 'Greeks and Egyptians in the Ptolemaic army and administration', *Aegyptus* 65 (1985), 57–66, shows that by the second century, nomenclature reflects an individual's social role, not ancestry; and one individual could operate simultaneously in both cultures, employing a different name in each.
- 8 P. W. Pestman, *Marriage and Matrimonial Property in Ancient Egypt* (Leiden, 1961), analyses the three different forms of marriage document.
- 9 BM 10524, published by S. R. K. Glanville, *Catalogue of Demotic Papyri in the British Museum I: A Theban Archive from the Reign of Ptolemy I Soter* (Oxford, 1939), 19–25.
- 10 On the extent to which Greek colonists in general were accompanied by women and families, see A. K. Dalby, 'Greeks abroad: social organisation and food among the Ten Thousand', *JHS* 112 (1992), 16–30, at pp. 19–20, and especially note 29.
- 11 *UPZ* I 1 (late 4th c. BC); full publication details of *UPZ* and other editions of papyri cited here by their standard abbreviations may conveniently be found in E. G. Turner, *Greek Papyri*², 159–77. For a comprehensive study of Ptolemaic Memphis, see D. J. Thompson, *Memphis under the Ptolemies* (Princeton, 1988); on the Hellenomemphites, pp. 95–7.
- 12 Diodorus Siculus 19.85.4; 20.47.4. *P.Hal.* I lines 124–65 (= *Select Papyri* vol. II no. 201) contains the provisions of Alexandrian law for safeguarding the dependants of men in royal service. R. S. Bagnall, 'The origins of Ptolemaic kleruchs', *BASP* 21 (1984), 7–20, demonstrates that the kleruchic class was the creation of this early and relatively brief period, and gives references to the substantial earlier literature on kleruchs.
- 13 Particularly by P. M. Fraser, *Ptolemaic Alexandria*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1972), 71–2.
- 14 W. Clarysse, 'Some Greeks in Egypt', in J. H. Johnson (ed.), *Life in a Multicultural Society*, (Chicago, 1992), 51–6; Monimos son of Kleandros, a second generation Alexandrian, and his wife Esoeris.
- 15 From 305 BC, Ptolemy son of Lagos took the Greek title 'basileus', and was treated as Pharaoh by the Egyptians.
- 16 Strabo 17.1.42.
- 17 Note the disparity in numbers of Greek settlers in nearby villages (set out in D. W. Rathbone, 'Villages, land and population in Graeco-Roman Egypt', *PCPhS* n.s. 36 (1990), 103–42, at p. 113); the proximity in which Greeks and Egyptians lived, and the variety of household composition: e.g. *CPR* XIII 4, a population and tax list from Trikomia (= H. Harrauer (ed.), *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri XIII (Gr. Texte IX): neue Papyri zum Steuerwesen im 3. Jh. v. Chr.*, Vienna, 1987).
- 18 Accepting the basic validity of the population estimates in D. W. Rathbone, op. cit. (previous note): from a total Alexandrian population of some 500,000, we should expect over 100,000 Greek females (some non-citizens in addition to the citizens); cf. Diodorus' 300,000 'eleutheroi', 17.52.6. To the relatively firm estimate of 50,000 kleruchs, we should probably add at least the same number of male civilian immigrants; but I have argued above that neither of these groups is likely to have been accompanied by as many women.
- 19 On Ptolemy's mistresses, Athenaeus, 13.576e–f; cf. Herodotus' account of the famous *hetaira* Rhodopis at Naukratis, who was bought by Sappho's brother (Hdt. 2.134–5).
- 20 *OGIS* 56, lines 46–73.

- 21 *Women in Hellenistic Egypt, from Alexander to Kleopatra* (New York, 1984), 59; her chapter on Alexandrian women provides much more material than can be included here.
- 22 E.g. BGU IV 1121=*Select Papyri* I 41: an Alexandrian woman leases out a papyrus marsh belonging to herself and her minor son; BGU IV 1100: an Alexandrian citizen and his wife jointly give away their daughter in marriage (in other cases, the bride gives herself away; see C.Préaux, 'Le statut de la femme, à l'époque hellénistique, principalement en Egypte', *Recueils de la société Jean Bodin XI: La Femme* (Brussels, 1959), 155).
- 23 BGU V 1210 (*Gnomon of the Idios Logos*) #15; however, restrictions on Alexandrian women's right to inherit (#6, #9) seem very Augustan in tone, and may have been introduced by the Roman administration: see further A.K.Bowman and D.Rathbone, 'Cities and administration in Roman Egypt', *JRS* 82 (1992), 107–27, especially 115f.
- 24 R.van Bremen, 'Women and wealth', p. 228.
- 25 See S.Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, p. 54.
- 26 See further, E.G.Turner, *Greek Papyri*², 42–7.
- 27 The effects of the foundation of Ptolemais on the surrounding economy are almost wholly undocumented. Major temple-building projects (e.g. at Philae by Ptolemy II and his successors and the complete reconstruction of the temple of Horus at Edfu begun by Ptolemy III in 238) must also have had profound social and economic implications, but were directed to enhancing the prestige (articulated in traditionally Egyptian terms) of an indigenous local elite as a counterweight to the enormously powerful but potentially disaffected priesthood at Thebes, rather than towards introducing a foreign elite based on novel forms of wealth.
- 28 E.G.Turner in *Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd edn, vol. VII, ch. 5 provides the best general survey of early Ptolemaic administration.
- 29 An aroua is 0.28 hectares (approximately two-thirds of an acre).
- 30 See C.Orrieux, *Les papyrus de Zénon. L'horizon d'un grec en Egypte au IIIe siècle avant J.C.* (Paris, 1983) and *Zénon de Caunos, parepidemos, et le destin grec* (Paris, 1985). Of works in English, M.I.Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 1941), vol. I, 351–66, still best conveys the 'entrepreneurial' character of Zenon's milieu.
- 31 Epitaphs to this animal are preserved in *P.Cairo Zenon* IV 59532.
- 32 E.g. *P.Cairo Zenon* II 59146: 'Agathon to Zenon, greeting. Mestris the mother of Athenais, Menippos' wife, has given me what she says are yours: one chlamys, two chitons, one with sleeves. They are finished...'; cf. *P.Cairo Zenon* II 59263, III 59433; *P. Lugd.-Bat.* XX 62 (=P.W.Pestman (ed.), *Greek and Demotic Texts from the Zenon Archive*, Leiden, 1980). Weaving was an important industry on Apollonios' estate, in which women played a significant, if subordinate, part; see *PSI* IV 341: two brothers, specialists in 'all the skills of weaving performed by women', proposed to come, accompanied by their mother and the wife of one of them, to seek employment at Philadelphia.
- 33 E.g. Tateis, a *betaira*, is listed among several women possibly connected with the beer monopoly: *P.Lugd.-Bat.* XX 63.
- 34 E.g. *P.Cairo Zenon* II 59292 lines 52ff.: Syrian women among the work-force in a vineyard; *P.Mich.* I 29: a request by Senchons, a widow, to Zenon to return her she-ass, so that she could take bee-hives to the pastures; *P.Lond.* VII 1976: petition by Aunchis, a manageress of a beer shop, to enlist Zenon's help in

- getting back her daughter, who had run off with a vinedresser (a Greek, married already!).
- 35 *P.Petrie* II 42 H 8(f); Kleon's archive is the subject of N.Lewis, *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Oxford, 1986), ch. 2, where this letter is quoted.
- 36 E.g. much of *P.Petrie*, *P.Hibeh*.
- 37 *P.Petrie* III 22c: 'Evidence in the case of Attalos v. Lamiske. I live in Krokodilopolis with my father and my mother, Isidote, in a house...partly opposite which...is a building occupied by Herakleia, in which I spend most of the day working with her'; the witness proceeds to deny seeing any dispute or Lamiske's husband. The women in this case are not *betairai*, as they may be in a more dramatic case: '...I saw Khrysis and many other persons sitting inside (a house also used as a fulling-workshop). Athenais here was sitting some way off from Khrysis, for whom I am testifying, and began abusing her. Khrysis laughed, and I saw Athenais leap up out of her seat, approach Khrysis [and hit her with her] left hand and then slap her in the face with the flat of both hands and seize her... Then she seized the linen chiton she had on and tore it in two...[Then Khrysis] called on me and the bystanders to be witnesses to the scene...'; *P.Hibeh* II 200.
- 38 *Politics* 1270a 24–34; see the illuminating discussion by S.Hodkinson, 'Inheritance, marriage and demography: perspectives upon the success and decline of Classical Sparta', in A.Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind her Success* (London, 1989), 79–121.
- 39 Note that *P.Merton* I 5 (mid-2nd c. BC) shows that female citizens of Ptolemais could own land belonging to the city.
- 40 J.M.Modrzejewski, 'Régime foncier et statut sociale dans l'Égypte ptolémaïque', in *Terre et paysans dépendants dans les sociétés antiques (Colloque Besançon, mai 1974)*, (Paris, 1979), 163–88.
- 41 See 'The economy as instituted process', in K.Polanyi, C.Arensberg and H.Pearson (eds.), *Trade and Market in the Early Empires* (Glencoe, 1957), 243–69.
- 42 For a general discussion see J.H.Johnson, 'The economic role of the Egyptian priesthood in Ptolemaic Egypt', in L.H.Lesko (ed.), *Egyptological Studies in Honour of R.A.Parker* (Hanover, NH, 1986), 70–84. The demotic Hauswaldt papyri from Edfu provide the clearest third-century BC example: W.Spiegelberg (ed.), *Die demotischen Papyri Hauswaldt* (Leipzig, 1913).
- 43 See N.Lewis, *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt*, 88–103.
- 44 J.Rowlandson, 'Freedom and subordination in ancient agriculture: the case of the *basilikoi georgoi* of Ptolemaic Egypt', in P.Cartledge and F.D.Harvey (eds), *CRUX: Essays presented to G.E.M.de Ste.Croix* (London, 1985), 327–46; 333–4 on females.
- 45 *SB* VIII 9790.
- 46 See the Herakleopolite land registers published in *BGU* XIV; the references to women are conveniently collected in Appendix III, p. 226.
- 47 As early as 271 BC, we find a woman called Dionysia paying on behalf of a male for the rent of the *kleros* of Protogenes; *P.Hibeh* I 99. *P.Tebt.* III.2 1001 verso (early 2nd c. BC) line 41 may attest a woman making payments for a *kleros*.
- 48 *P.Hibeh* I 91 (4th year of either Ptolemy III or Ptolemy IV). At least two of the witnesses were soldiers, and the 'basilikon koluma' clause suggests that the land was from a *kleros* which might be taken back by the king.
- 49 *BGU* X 1944.
- 50 J.Bingen, 'The third-century B.C. land-leases from Tholthis', *ICS* 3 (1978), 74–80.
- 51 See S.Pomeroy, 'Women in Roman Egypt: a preliminary study based on papyri', in H. Foley (ed.), *Reflections of Women in Antiquity* (New York, 1981), 303–22

- on female landownership in general. The old Ptolemaic kleruchic land (now usually called 'katoikic') in fact forms the bulk of private arable land attested in the Roman period. Over one third of the parties to sales of katoikic land listed by Montevecchi were female (O.Montevecchi, 'Ricerche di sociologia nei documenti dell'Egitto greco-romano: III—i contratti di compra-vendita', *Aegyptus* 23 (1943), 11–89; see p. 61 on the 'cessions', i.e. sales of katoikic land); this proportion is at least as high as that of female owners of other forms of property in the Roman period: D.H.Hobson, 'Women as property owners in Roman Egypt', *TAPhA* 113 (1983), 311–21.
- 52 E.g. *P.Lond.* VII 1948 refers to planting 80,000 vines.
- 53 J.Bingen, *Le Papyrus Revenue Laws—Tradition grecque et adaptation hellénistique, Rheinisch-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Vorträge G231* (Opladen, 1978).
- 54 *P.Tebt.* III.1 720.
- 55 *CPR XVIII 11* (=B.Kramer (ed.), *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri XVIII (Gr. Texte XIII): das Vertragsregister von Theogenis (P.Vindob.G. 40618)*, Vienna, 1991). The arrangement has several untypical features; see the introduction to the text. But it is nonetheless clear that the orchard belonged to Philoumene.
- 56 *P.Tebt.* III.1 815 frag. 1 recto, col. iii (described briefly, p. 280). Note also a vineyard belonging to Eirene, *P.Petrie* II 30e=III 69b.
- 57 R.Lane Fox, 'Aspects of inheritance in the Greek world', in P.Cartledge and F.D.Harvey (eds), *CRUX: Essays presented to G.E.M.de Ste.Croix* (London, 1985), 208–232, at 224–5.
- 58 Several of the petitions in *P.Enteuxis* relate to inheritance disputes: e.g. *P.Enteuxis* 15, 17, 18, 19.
- 59 H.Kreller, *Erbrechtliche Untersuchungen* (Leipzig, 1919) is now very out of date, but has not been superseded as the standard work.
- 60 *P.Eleph.* 2.
- 61 W.Clarysse, *The Petrie Papyri: Second Edition (P.Petrie²) Volume I: The Wills* (Brussels, 1991).
- 62 See the perceptive remarks by J.F.Oates in his review of *P.Petrie²*, *BASP* 29 (1992), 191–8, esp. 196–7.
- 63 Compare the table of provisions in *P.Petrie²* 26–9 with the similar table of Oxyrhynchite wills from the Roman period in J.Rowlandson, 'Landholding in the Oxyrhynchite nome, 30 BC–c.300 AD' (unpubl. Oxford D.Phil thesis, 1983), 122–3: fewer wives seem to appear as legatees in this later period, when property ownership by women was more extensive. See also H.-A.Rupprecht, 'Zum Ehegattenerbrecht nach den Papyri', *BASP* 22 (1985), 291–5.
- 64 *P.Petrie²* I 16, lines 21–4; cf. line 77 (will of Kalas, Macedonian), and perhaps 22 line 11 (restored). Compare *P.Enteuxis* 13: a widow's petition complaining that she was prevented by the householder from completing a wall begun by her husband which would divide off the portion allotted to him as a billet.
- 65 *P.Petrie²* I 28, assuming that the extensive restorations are correct.
- 66 In only one of these cases was the testator a kleruch: *P.Petrie²* I 11: a Boiotian officer left all his possessions to an Alexandrian woman. Other cases relate to civilians: *P.Petrie²* I 1, lines 33–68; 24, lines 15–38.
- 67 *P.Petrie²* I 1, lines 33–68.
- 68 *P.Petrie²* p. 33.
- 69 No impetus towards testacy can have come from Egyptian law, which, until it borrowed the Greek *diatheke*, had no facility for making a separate testamentary

- disposition, although inheritance provisions could appear in marriage documents. Note that *P.Lond.* VII 2191 (late 2nd c. BC), a transfer (written in Greek) of substantial property from the woman Tathotis to her daughter Kobahetesis, is not formally a *diatheke*, but a 'cession'; it provides important insights into women's role as property owners in the village of Pathyris, supplying a link between two family 'archives' (see P.W.Pestman, 'A Greek testament from Pathyris', *JEA* 55 (1969), 129–60).
- 70 In *P.Eleph.* 1, the dowry comprised 'clothing and ornaments worth 1,000 drachmas' (line 4); in *P.Tebt.* III 815 frag. 4 recto col. i 1ff. it was 700 drachmas; *CPR* XVIII (see table, p. 55) now provides seven more examples, ranging from 400 to 1,000 (copper) drachmas.
- 71 See A.E.Samuel, 'The money economy and the Ptolemaic peasantry', *BASP* 21 (1984), 187–206; he also notes the further problem of ambiguity whether silver or copper drachmas are meant (the ratio of which rose in the late third century from 1:60 to 1:500).
- 72 E.g. *P.Enteuxis* 17: Menella, a Cyrenean woman born in Egypt, inherits from her father's younger brother.
- 73 Father: *BGU* VI 1283; probably *P.Hibeh* II 208; *CPR* XVIII 6. Mother: *P.Tebt.* III.1 815 frag.4 recto col. i 1ff.; *CPR* XVIII 12.
- 74 *CPR* XVIII 8, 13, 17, 20, 28 (where the father was present).
- 75 W.Peremans and E.Van't Dack, *Prosopographia Ptolemaica*, vol. I (Louvain, 1950), nos. 1489–659; vol. VIII (Addenda; 1975), pp. 100ff.
- 76 R.Bogaert's studies of Ptolemaic banks are fundamental, especially 'Le statut des banques en Égypte ptolémaïque', *AC* 50 (1981), 86–99. N.Lewis, *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt*, ch. 3 gives an accessible introduction.
- 77 *Prosopographia Ptolemaica* I 1122–294 with VIII pp. 89ff.
- 78 *P.Tebt.* III.1 761.
- 79 *CPR* XVIII 30.
- 80 E.g. *P.Hibeh* I 89; see the note on lines 10–12, and *BGU* VI 1273, a loan of money by a Cyrenean woman with usufruct of a tower in lieu of interest.
- 81 *P.Lond.* VII 1986, a loan of 100 silver drachmas by a woman of Ptolemais; *P.Hibeh* II 261, 262, fragments of loans by Belistiche (surely not Ptolemy II's mistress!); *CPR* XVIII 16, Herais lends 270 or 370 copper drachmas to an Alexandrian man; *P.Tebt.* III 815 frag. 3 verso i 19ff., Philotera, a married woman, lends 150 copper drachmas without interest to a kleruch (note the 'lease from Philotera', frag. 3 verso col. ii (p. 293)); frag. 4 recto i 23ff., Eutychis borrows 48 copper drachmas at interest for 12 months; *P.Enteuxis* 49, a father complains that an *betaira* had fraudulently inveigled his under-age son into signing a loan of 1,000 drachmas to her; *P.Ryl.* IV 584, a loan secured on a woman's mortgaged vineyard.
- 82 E.g. *P.Petrie* III 58a. The best example comes from the second-century archive of Dionysios son of Kephalas, whose wife and mother were party to some of his debts: see N.Lewis, *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt*, ch. 8.
- 83 E.g. *P.Enteuxis* 69 (petition about a woman's purchase of a plot of open ground); *P.Tebt.* III 815 frag. 2 recto ii 24ff.
- 84 *P.Tebt.* III 814; Theroys is described as an 'Arsinoite woman', about fifty years of age. Her *kyrios*, despite a Greek name, also seems not to be Greek; he is described by the obscure term, 'Persian under employ'. The debtor was a Syro-Egyptian.
- 85 S.Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*, ch. 5; note her conclusion (p. 173):

'Thus, in the economic sphere...there was less distinction between the genders than there was, for example, in Athens, or in Greek society in general of an earlier period...no other Greek society of the Hellenistic period provides a comparable quantity and variety of documentation for the improvement of the economic status of respectable women.'

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WHY PHILIP WON



Earl McQueen

In his digression on the treatment of kings in historiographical works, Polybius writes (8.9.1): ‘At the beginning of his work on Philip, Theopompus says that he was stimulated to the work for this reason, that Europe had never produced before a man altogether like Philip son of Amyntas.’ Though Theopompus’ remark has been seen, perhaps rightly, as deliberately ambiguous and something of a back-handed compliment,¹ Polybius undoubtedly believed it to be eulogistic, and, taken at face value, it is evidence for how Philip was seen by at least one great writer of antiquity. Even his chief adversary Demosthenes was struck (1.14) by his restless activity (*polypragmosyne*), his insatiable ambition (2.18), his skill in seizing opportunities (1.3), and at 2.15 comes as close as he ever does to a favourable comment when he declares: ‘In action he has elected to suffer whatever may befall him, putting before a life of safety the distinction of achieving what no other king of Macedon ever achieved’. Clearly, whether Philip was liked or loathed by his contemporaries, he could not be ignored, and made a forcible impression, favourable or otherwise, on every Greek whose path he crossed. In this chapter, I hope to select for detailed treatment a few of the many reasons that could be adduced for Philip’s success, including his interest in military reform, his cultivation of influential Greeks by means of lavish hospitality and the creation of a widespread network of guest-friendships, and finally his diplomatic skills, which enabled him to fascinate and manipulate so many of his contemporaries both individually and collectively.

In 359,² when he took over the Macedonian throne,³ he did so under conditions which were far from auspicious. His brother Perdikkas III had just been defeated and killed, with the loss of 4,000 Macedonians, at the hands of Bardylis, the formidable king of the no less formidable Illyrians, leaving as heir a mere child; the country, shorn of skilled fighters and resources, was wide open to Illyrian and Paionian invasion; no fewer than three pretenders were disputing the throne and outside powers, both Greek and barbarian, were preparing to intervene, with the aim of installing a puppet ruler sympathetic to their interests. The country was on the verge of disintegration. Yet only twenty-three years later at the time of Philip’s death, Macedonia had subjugated all the neighbouring barbarian peoples; she had risen to become the strongest economic and military power in the Aegean world; she had

broken the Greek coalition of states at Khaironeia and compelled the feuding city-states to unite in the League of Corinth, the constitution of which Philip had personally devised; he had secured election to the post of *hegemon* of this organization and was even preparing to lead a Panhellenic crusade against the vast Persian empire when he was struck down at the hand of an assassin. From anarchy and threatened extinction, Philip had raised Macedonia to the status of a power of the first rank that was a fit match not only for the Greek states but even for the Achaemenid empire itself.

But in 359, all this was very much in the future. At the time, the leading Greek city-states, Sparta apart, appeared to be flourishing: Thebes, now the strongest land power in the Greek world, was still glorying in the hegemony won by her victory at Leuktra; Athens, her Confederacy still relatively intact, was intent on acquiring new possessions on the Aegean seaboard, though Amphipolis, the greatest prize of all, continued to elude her; Thessaly, under the rule first of Jason and then of Alexander of Pherai, had also attained a position of some importance in northern Greece, while in the Peloponnese, the resurrected Arcadian League, though already weakened by a split within its ranks, still remained the most significant power. Macedonia, by contrast, was at the time of Philip's accession a backward kingdom, economically underdeveloped,⁴ divided both ethnically and politically, a prey to internal dissension, devoid of large cities, possessed of a constitution of a primitive kind and seen by its more civilized neighbours as a habitation of barbarians rather than Greeks.⁵

Kings such as Alexander I and Arkhelaos had considerable achievements to their credit in their attempts to raise the country from its insignificant status (the latter even merits the praise of Thucydides (2.100) for his efforts), but the attempts had been undermined by a combination of circumstances whereby the kingdom remained weak. In the first place, Macedonia was always an easy prey for the savage and powerful barbarian tribes who lived outside her borders, to the north-west the Illyrians, to the north the Paionians, and to the east the Thracians. These tribes found in Macedonia an inexhaustible source of plunder, and the lack of any effective means of preventing these incursions ensured that throughout her history she would suffer. In addition, she experienced periodic intervention from Greek states to the south, be they neighbours like the Khalkidians or Thessalians, or great powers from farther away, Athenians, Spartans or Thebans. Such states benefited from Macedonian weakness and sought to exploit it for their own ends, political or economic or both. For much of the time between the archaic period and Philip's accession, she found herself hemmed in by a series of Greek foundations on her seaboard, on the west coast of the Thermaic Gulf by Pydna and Methone, currently Athenian possessions, to the south by the Khalkidian cities, and to the south-east by the erstwhile Athenian colony of Amphipolis. For much of the time the various mining districts lay outside Macedonian control and were exploited by whatever power happened currently to be in possession, whether Greek or barbarian. It was to fall to Philip to acquire these cities and mining areas and thus to build up his country's population and resources.

The disunity of the Macedonian kingdom was aggravated by the chronic inability of the king to control territories outside the central area: peripheral districts such as the Upper Macedonian cantons were for the most part of a different ethnic stock,

had their own royal families and tended to look just as often to Epirus as to Macedonia.⁶ The rulers of these cantons had a strongly nationalistic outlook and enjoyed a varying degree of independence. Though the Macedonian king sought to bring them to heel by military or diplomatic means, the extent of his control fluctuated in proportion to the strength of his position at home. Moreover feuds within the royal family did much to destabilize the country. The lack of any clearly established rules for the succession and the practice of polygamy on the part of the king ensured that there was no shortage of claimants when the throne fell vacant. In the event the ultimate choice lay with the army assembly, but the formal criteria on which it would choose remained quite obscure,⁷ if indeed there were any in operation at all. Even the rejection of a candidate's claim did not necessarily put an end to the matter, since it could be revived whenever his prospects of success looked promising.⁸

But these were problems which Philip was confident of being able to deal with in time. Barbarian incursions could be prevented by a combination of force, diplomacy and the establishment of military settlements designed to block off the mountain passes which formed the natural means of entry into the country. The cities on the seaboard and the mining areas could be acquired piecemeal whenever the opportunity offered. The Greek states could be played off each against the other. The Upper Macedonian principalities could be integrated into the kingdom by a policy of population transfers, the abolition of their ruling families and the incorporation of their manpower into a united national army. Rival claimants to the throne were either eliminated or, in the case of nephew Amyntas who showed no ambition, conciliated with a marriage alliance (Satyrus, *Life of Philip* 5).

In the light of their regular underestimation of Macedonia, few Greeks would have rated at all highly Philip's chances of being able to implement even a fraction of his plans, but Philip knew his country and his fellow countrymen. He would have been aware that Macedonia had certain advantages over the Greek states which his southern neighbours chose not to notice. In the first place, he ruled over a large country which not only covered a much wider area but also supported a bigger population than any one Greek state. The plains, which were by Greek standards broad and fertile, the terraced land on the lower slopes of the mountains and the river valleys together ensured that the Macedonians were agriculturally self-sufficient in most products,⁹ with the exception of olives, which do not take kindly to the harsh winter colds experienced there.¹⁰ They consequently did not suffer from the sort of agrarian pressures that beset so many of the Greeks, especially those with small territories, while the population was in normal circumstances large enough to guarantee the availability of a sizeable army. Moreover the plains were sufficiently vast to permit the rearing of horses on a scale which most states would have envied. Thus Macedonia, like Thessaly, looked to the cavalry to supply its main fighting strength. In addition, she was blessed with an abundance of natural resources, of which the most important were the forests and the mines scattered in various regions which produced silver in abundance, sometimes along with gold. These were gifts of nature possessed in such quantity by few Greek states: since the trees of Greece were inferior in both quality and quantity to their Macedonian counterparts,¹¹ Macedonian timber and pitch were in constant demand from naval powers like Athens. The availability of home-produced silver, one of the mainstays of the Athenian

economy,¹² lent to Macedonia even greater economic strength, once she was in a position to exploit it. It was clear to Philip that Macedonia was and always had been potentially strong, and this potential he was determined fully to realize. It is one of the marks of Philip's greatness that he succeeded in shattering irrevocably the constraints which had restricted Macedonian growth in the past. Not only was he able to settle once and for all many of the problems with which the country had long been beset, he was also able to transform it into the military and economic giant it was to become by the end of the reign.

Among his many achievements pride of place must be given to his military reforms, since it was his new model army which was destined to be the instrument of Macedonian expansion abroad. The loss of 4,000 troops on Perdikkas' ill-fated Illyrian campaign gave Philip the opportunity to overhaul the military system and to begin afresh. Our sources¹³ stress the interest in military science which he is likely to have learned in the course of his enforced residence in Thebes as a youth, when he lived in the house of Pammenes (Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 26.4) and came to know the great Epameinondas (Diodorus 16.2.2–3), though the extent of the debt owed is a matter of conjecture.¹⁴

At all events he quickly set about re-establishing the Macedonian army as a serious force to be reckoned with. Above all, the short-term priorities were the conversion of the currently poor-quality infantry into a formidable fighting force, and its elevation to full strength in order to make good the losses sustained by Perdikkas. Few kings took such a personal interest in military reform as did Philip, whose achievements in this field are summed up somewhat vaguely by Diodorus (16.3.1–2) as follows: 'Philip improved the organization of his forces and equipped the men suitably with weapons of war—he devised the compact order and equipment of his phalanx—and was the first to organize the Macedonian phalanx.' By 'devising the equipment of the phalanx' Diodorus is presumably referring to the introduction of the long pike or thrusting spear (*sarissa*) some sixteen feet in length, which, because of its weight, was wielded by both hands, and came to be recognized as superior in combat to the standard weaponry of the Greek hoplite.¹⁵ The spear carried by the hoplite was normally some seven feet in length and could be wielded in one hand, thus leaving the other free to bear his shield. His Macedonian opposite number, who needed both hands free to wield the *sarissa*, had to be content with a very small shield hung over his left shoulder, and, in the absence of a breastplate, would be obliged to rely for protection on archers or other lightly armed troops. In combat, the Macedonian pike could project some twelve feet and make the enemy extremely vulnerable, while the absence of a large shield enabled the phalanx to operate in a more densely packed formation than the hoplites opposed to them. In combat, the fully trained phalanx would normally find it easy to open up a gap in the enemy line, though, on the rare occasion when such a situation failed to occur,¹⁶ this inability to retain a compact formation would expose its ranks to penetration by the opposing hoplites.

Philip went on to improve the quality and stamina of his army by introducing a further set of reforms intended, *inter alia*, to increase the mobility of his troops. Frontinus (*Strat.* 4.1.6) reports as follows:

When Philip was organizing his first army, he forbade anyone to use a carriage. Cavalry were permitted one attendant each, infantry one servant for every ten men, and this attendant was ordered to carry the handmills. When the troops marched out to summer quarters, he ordered each man to carry on his own shoulders flour for thirty days.

Another exercise designed with the same purpose is what Diodorus (16.3.1) terms the *exoplasia*, some sort of manoeuvres under arms, perhaps the exercise described by Polyainos (4.2.10) in the following words: 'Philip used to train the Macedonians before danger was at hand to take up arms and to march often for 300 stades carrying with them their helmets, shields, greaves and spears, and on top of their arms provisions and utensils for daily use.' Diodorus also refers in the same passage to the introduction of incentives such as *gymnasioi enagonioi*, apparently competitions with financial rewards for the winners. It is also possible that Philip rather than Alexander instituted new military grades based on efficiency, such as the *dimoiritai* ('soldiers on double pay') and the *dekastateroi* ('ten-stater men') who are mentioned first in Asia with Alexander (Arrian, *Anabasis* 7.23.4). An anecdote quoted by Polyainos (4.2.1), admittedly of dubious reliability, hints at a general tightening up of discipline among the troops.¹⁷ Moreover the constant campaigning undertaken by the military throughout Philip's reign in all seasons and terrains against a wide variety of opponents kept it battle-ready at all times: there were few if any years when Philip was content to sit idly at home, as Demosthenes is only too willing to remind us.¹⁸

Because of the excellent quality of his cavalry, much of Philip's army reform programme was devoted to the infantry. However, there were problems with the cavalry too, notably the need to remedy the terrible losses which it had sustained in Perdikkas' Illyrian war. Accordingly, in his attempts to bring it up to full strength, he spared no pains to recruit new Companions, not just from Macedonia but from the Greek world as a whole. Whenever he encountered a likely prospect, Philip would endow him with a land grant on a scale sufficient to render him eligible for Companion status. Since dispossession of existing Macedonians was no part of his plan, he regularly made available land hitherto belonging to the Greek cities on his seaboard which he had destroyed or incorporated into his kingdom, such as Pydna,¹⁹ Methone,²⁰ Olynthos and other Khalkidian cities,²¹ and Amphipolis.²² The creation of Companions of non-Macedonian origin is attested by Theopompus (Fragment 224J), who informs us that 'Philip's Companions were men who had flocked to him from here, there and everywhere, some from Macedonia itself, others from Thessaly and the rest of Greece.'²³ The staggering increase in the number of Companions effected by Philip may be seen from a comparison of the 600 available for action against Bardylis in 358 (Diodorus 16.4.3) with the 3,300 at Alexander's disposal in 334.²⁴

There was also Philip's interest in siegecraft. His desire to keep abreast of the latest technical developments in the field led him to put on the payroll a corps of the leading engineers of the day, who developed in his service an impressive variety of siege machinery, including Polyeidos of Thessaly, the inventor of the torsion catapult, and his pupils Diades and Kharias.²⁵ Though such machines were probably unavailable to Philip before the abortive sieges of Perinthos and Byzantion in 340, his earlier

record in siegecraft is striking: the fall in record time of Amphipolis (357), which had defied the might of Athens for so long, Methone (354) and Olynthos (348) attests to Philip's acquisition of both efficient machinery and highly competent technicians.

In short, by the end of his reign, Philip had created what Demosthenes (8.11) calls a *dynamis synestekuiia*, a 'standing army',²⁶ 'with weapons constantly at the ready' (Demosthenes 18.235). The infantry had been transformed out of all recognition into seasoned veterans inured to discipline and hardship, the cavalry had been expanded fivefold, and a corps of engineers and technicians added. No expense had been spared in the creation of a unit which in mobility, versatility, discipline, sheer professionalism and the co-ordination of its constituent parts was more than a match for anything that the opposition, Greek or barbarian, could put up against it. Most Greek armies of the day were in fact composed of the contingents of a loose and hastily formed coalition of mutually suspicious cities, heavily armed but cumbersome and slow to manoeuvre, not infrequently ill-disciplined and with little experience in fighting as an organic unit, padded out with a considerable mercenary element which could at times be fairly indifferent to the outcome. Against such opposition Philip's superb fighting force played a decisive role in gaining him his superiority.

If the army was the instrument whereby Philip secured the hegemony of Greece, his own command of that army was no less significant. Among the advantages which he enjoyed over the Greek states was his constitutional position in Macedonia,²⁷ which gave him *inter alia* unfettered control over the mobilization and direction of the army, together with the conduct of foreign policy. In this respect the contrast with his main adversaries, democratic Athens and Boiotia, is striking. Whereas Philip could act promptly and decisively both in council and in the field, the process of initiating policy at Athens lay in the hands of the individual citizen who must first appear before the *boule*, persuade it to have a motion put on the agenda of the *ekklesia* and argue his case there in the face of the interruptions and objections of his opponents, who might even be able to delay action by a resort to the *graphe paranomon*. Moreover the responsibility for implementing a decision lay with a collective and annually elected military leadership, at Athens the ten *strategoí*, in Boiotia the seven *Boiotarchs*,²⁸ equal in authority and subject to accountability. Consequently it is not surprising to find Demosthenes claim (6.4, cf. 2.23, 10.29) that Athens excels in words, Philip in deeds. On top of the painfully protracted decisionmaking process, the deep-rooted animosities of the city-states were to prove a handicap to Athens in the search for allies: of those who eventually joined the anti-Macedonian coalition at Khaironeia, several had feuds of long duration with Athens and participated not out of friendship but because of a suspicion of Philip's motives.

The advantages enjoyed by Philip over the Athenians were well known to Demosthenes, who often brought them to the attention of his audience:

For swift and opportune moments of war, he has an immense advantage over us in that he is sole director of his own policy, and he unites in himself the functions of general, ruler and treasurer, and is always at the head of his army.

(1.4, Loeb translation by J.H.Vince)

For resources, the city possessed the islanders, but not all, only the weakest ...a contribution of forty-five talents, all collected in advance; not a single private or trooper apart from our own army. But what was most alarming to us...Aeschines and his party had made all our neighbours...more disposed to enmity than to friendship.... Now consider those of Philip.... In the first place, he was the despotic commander of his adherents.... Secondly, they had their weapons constantly in their hands. Then he was well provided with money; he did whatever he chose, without giving notice by publishing decrees or deliberating in public, without fear of prosecution by informers or indictment for illegal measures. He was responsible to nobody: he was the absolute autocrat, commander and master of everybody and everything. And I, his chosen adversary...of what was I master? Of nothing at all! Public speaking was my only privilege: and that you permitted to Philip's hired servants on the same terms as to me...

(18.234–5, Loeb translation by C.A. and J.H.Vince)

Nor was Demosthenes the only orator to speak of Philip in this way: Isocrates, far more sympathetic to him than was the faction of Demosthenes, published an open letter to Philip, in which he emphasizes his advantages as follows:

I saw that all the other men of high repute were living under the control of politics and laws, with no power to do anything save what was prescribed... while you and you alone had been granted by fortune free scope both to send ambassadors to whomsoever you desire and to receive them from whomsoever you please, and to say whatever you think expedient; and that, besides, you, beyond any of the Hellenes, were possessed of both wealth and power, which are the only things in the world that are adapted at once to persuade and to compel.

(5.14–15, Loeb translation by G.Norlin)

Since this description of the contrast between Philip and the leaders of the Greek cities is remarkably similar to that found in Demosthenes, it shows that Philip's advantages were seen in the same light by Athenians at opposite ends of the political spectrum. Of course not all the states which opposed Philip were democracies, but the oligarchies were for the most part small and of lesser significance and it would not be unreasonable to say that the allied coalition facing Philip at Khaironeia possessed constitutions which, for all their merits in other respects, were not designed for successful warfare with a powerful autocrat. By virtue of his constitutional position, Philip had a head start over the Greeks, and knew it.

Of course not all autocrats were capable of producing the results achieved by Philip: the important factor was that Philip was not just an autocrat but an intelligent autocrat, whose abilities impressed Isocrates sufficiently for him to describe Philip as 'a man who is high minded, who is a lover of Greece and who has a broader vision than the rest of the world' (5.122). This could conceivably be rejected as empty flattery, but it is backed up by the testimony of Diodorus, who expresses admiration for his not

inconsiderable diplomatic skills; indeed he goes so far as to claim (16.95.2–3) that these were even more important than his military achievements:

The growth of Philip's power was due not so much to his prowess in arms as to his adroitness and cordiality, and it is said that he prided himself on his grasp of strategy and diplomatic success more than on his actual valour in battle.

(Loeb translation by C.B.Welles)

Philip's diplomatic successes were due in no small measure to the attractive aspects of his personality sketched by Diodorus and others, including affability (Diodorus 16.1.4, 3.3, 39.2, 60.4–5, 64.3); generosity (Diodorus 16.3.3, 55.4), adroitness (Diodorus 16.1.1, 3.3, 95.2; Justin 9.8) and sense of humour (Plutarch, *Moralia* 177c–179d, a collection of his *bons mots*). His personality was such as to appeal to most of the contemporaries who encountered him: once under his spell, they were only too willing to believe his assurances and to put trust in his good faith. Several aspects of his diplomacy repay investigation, and I select for the purposes of this essay his use of marriage as an instrument of policy, his cultivation of prominent individuals in the Greek states, and his knack of playing off one state against another to his own advantage.

The kings of Macedonia had always been aware of the political benefits to be gained from marrying into carefully selected families, but for no predecessor are as many as seven such marriages attested. Though polygamy had long been practised at the Macedonian court, few reaped rewards from diplomatic marriage on a scale comparable to those which accrued to Philip. The puritanical Theopompus, who judged his marriages by Greek standards, could denounce his promiscuous behaviour (Fragment 27J), but for Philip they were simply a means of consolidating his military successes and strengthening his contacts with the rulers of neighbouring peoples, be they Illyrians, Molossians, Getai, Thessalians or the principalities of Upper Macedonia.²⁹ Equally significant were the marriages arranged or intended for his children: of his daughters, Kynane was married to his nephew Amyntas, as already indicated, in an attempt to reconcile the latter to his rule, while Kleopatra, his daughter by Olympias, was, in a diplomatic master-stroke, wed to Olympias' brother Alexander of Epirus, as part of Philip's plan to neutralize his resentful wife, currently living in exile at her brother's court (Diodorus 16.91.4–6). Nor was he averse from rejecting match-making proposals involving his family even when the initiative came from elsewhere, as in the case of the Carian satrap Pixodaros, who sought an alliance with Philip to be cemented through a marriage between his daughter (Ada?) and Arrhidaïos, Philip's son by Philinna (Plutarch, *Alexander* 10). Unfortunately for Philip, the scheme was undermined by the interference of Alexander, and Philip lost an alliance that would have won him useful support both in Caria and in Cappadocia, the homeland of the girl's mother.³⁰

Even more important for Philip than marriage alliances was the assiduous cultivation of the leading men in as many Greek states as possible, in the hope that through their friendship he might be able to accumulate potentially useful information about the internal politics of the individual cities,³¹ though in practice this policy seems to

have produced better results in oligarchic regimes than in democracies.³² To an affable and sociable person like Philip, friendships meant a great deal, and if they could be turned to political advantage, so much the better. In his discussion of friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1155b ff.), Aristotle distinguishes three types, the 'pure' or 'complete' friendship based on goodness, in which each loves the other for what he is, and two inferior kinds, based respectively on pleasure and utility. The friendship of the first type need not concern us here, but Philip certainly availed himself of the two inferior varieties. In particular, he liked to throw parties for his Greek guests, whether wholly or partially from policy. Judged by Greek standards, Macedonian parties could be construed as orgies, and Philip as an inveterate drunkard,³³ but from his point of view they were extremely helpful for the acquisition of new and influential friends. As a typical instance may be cited Theopompus' account of his wooing of the Thessalians:

Philip, knowing that the Thessalians were licentious and wanton in their mode of life, organised parties for them and tried to amuse them in every way, dancing and rioting and submitting to every kind of licentiousness...and so he won over most Thessalians by parties rather than by presents.

(Fragment 162, translated by C.B.Gullick in the Loeb Athenaeus)

Similar stories of conviviality include the entertaining at a sacrificial banquet of some Theban envoys, who expressed pleasure that he was so courteously and generously inclined towards them (Demosthenes 19.140), and the hospitality provided for Aeschines on the occasion which gave rise to his famous description of Philip as 'a most capable fellow drinker' (Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 16.2). Demosthenes' sneer that the remark was more applicable to a sponge than to a king is a timely reminder that not all contemporaries were impressed by Philip's social functions: Demosthenes, the 'little man made up of syllables and a tongue' ([Demades], *On the Twelve Years* 51), austere, vehement and intensely serious (Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 11.4, 12.2; *Comp. Dem. and Cic.* 1.3 and 6) and, unfortunately for Philip, a waterdrinker (Demosthenes 6.30, 19.46), was not the man to achieve a good working relationship with his *bête noire*. However, Philip could be grateful that such persons were few.

Of more benefit to Philip than friendships based on pleasure were those which relied on utility. Such friendships are defined by Aristotle (*N.E.* 1156 a–b) as follows:

Those who love each other on grounds of utility do not love each other for their personal qualities, but only in so far as they derive some benefit from each other...such persons do not spend much time together, because sometimes they do not even like one another and therefore feel no need of such an association unless they are mutually useful. For they take pleasure in each other's company only in so far as they have hopes of advantage from it. Friendships with foreigners are generally included in this class.

In order to establish politically beneficial friendships, Philip made much use of venues such as the Olympia at Dion (Demosthenes 19.192–4), to which large numbers of actors and musicians were invited,³⁴ or the festival at which his daughter Kleopatra

married Alexander of Epirus (Diodorus 16.91.5–6), while links of friendship could also be forged with visiting embassies from the various Greek states,³⁵ whose members would normally be men of influence in the political circles of their home city. Though in Greece official contact would be confined to meetings of the public bodies which heard and replied to the envoys, in a monarchy like Macedonia, where foreign policy was the concern of the king, it would be Philip, not the army assembly, who would conduct the negotiations. Taking advantage of the opportunity provided, Philip would lay on entertainment for the envoys on a scale far beyond what diplomatic custom required. In particular he would invite the ambassadors to be his guests at festivals and parties, at which generous presents would be offered.³⁶ Is such liberality to be explained simply as a manifestation of traditional royal Macedonian hospitality on the Homeric model, or was Demosthenes correct in detecting ulterior motives? In a democratic state such as Athens, it was not the practice to keep a diplomatic slush fund, and visiting embassies could expect, at most, a meal at state expense, and even then only after the conclusion of negotiations. A powerful king like Philip, on the other hand, had plenty of money to throw around, and since Athenian envoys were in the business to win prestige and influence, not for the money,³⁷ they may have sought to ease their consciences by looking upon Philip's hand-outs as some sort of return for the time and expense involved in undertaking the embassy.³⁸

A third, if minor, category of visitor to Macedonia, albeit an unwilling one, whose presence there could be turned to Philip's advantage, was the prisoner of war. In the course of his frequent campaigns, Philip acquired these in large numbers, and by the rules of Greek warfare would be entitled to enslave or hold for ransom such captives as were not put to death.³⁹ Either of these options brought rich rewards, but Philip seems to have thought that there were times when release without ransom would produce, at least in the longer term, greater benefits. We know of three occasions when Athenian prisoners were freed without ransom *en masse*,⁴⁰ while the sporadic release of individual Athenians at other times is also on record.⁴¹ If a freed captive was a man prominent in his own city, so much the better, but even the release of many ordinary individuals might bring its rewards should the collective gratitude of many families swing public opinion in Philip's favour: at very least he would avoid intensifying such rancour as already existed.

In addition to cultivating Greeks in groups, Philip was assiduous in courting selected individuals. Of these, some, as we have seen, he had met while they were in Macedonia on official business, some were the recipients of a special invitation,⁴² others were recommended to him by existing friends,⁴³ while yet others turned up in Macedonia uninvited and succeeded in bringing themselves to his attention.⁴⁴ As a means of putting the relationship on a formal basis, Philip made particular use of the old-established institution of guest-friendship (*xenia kai philia*).⁴⁵ Since the institution was hereditary, some of his guest-friends would have been inherited through ancestral family ties, but the majority of his guest-friendships were established by Philip in person. Among the guest-friends of Philip who were men of standing in their communities may be mentioned Aeschines and Pythokles of Athens (Demosthenes 18.51, 284; 19.248, 314), Python and others unnamed from Thebes (Demosthenes 19.140),⁴⁶ Perillos and Ptoiodoros of Megara (Demosthenes

19.295, cf. 18.48), Demaratos of Corinth (Plutarch, *Alexander* 9) and Hieronymos of Kardia (not the historian but the father of Eumenes: see Plutarch, *Eumenes* 1.2; Nepos, *Eumenes* 1.4). To these may with all probability be added those listed as Philip's friends at Demosthenes 18.48 (Lasthenes and Euthykrates of Olynthos, cf. Dem. 8.40; Eudikos and Simos of Thessaly, Aristratos of Sicyon), along with Hipparkhos of Eretria (Plutarch, *Moralia* 178f., cf. Dem. 9.58) and Kallias of Chalcis, who impressed Philip sufficiently to be elevated to the rank of *betairos* ('Companion') only to fall from favour (Aeschines 3.89).⁴⁷ If we include among Philip's friends the list of pro-Macedonian traitors named by Demosthenes (18.295) and add incidentally mentioned individuals like Automedon of Eretria (Dem. 6.59), we begin to see how widely the network of Philip's friendships extended.⁴⁸

Herman's study of the institution of *xenia*, which he terms 'ritualised friendship', has shown that from its beginnings in the Homeric epics it was regarded in aristocratic circles as a sort of fictitious kinship,⁴⁹ cemented not only by ties of hospitality and gift exchange but by an obligation to promote the interests of the *xenos*.⁵⁰ In the case of Philip, the dividing line between the gifts provided by a host and the bribes of a paymaster was very thin: the vast resources at his disposal in the later years of his reign⁵¹ meant that an exchange of gifts with him was in practice very much a one-way transaction. Though our evidence for the presents lavished by Philip on visitors to his court comes mainly from the partisan Demosthenes, who sees in the bribes of Philip the motivating factor behind practically all pro-Macedonian political activity, stories and anecdotes of Philip's bribery are common in a wide variety of sources.⁵² Such amply attested generosity suggests that not all of Demosthenes' allegations are likely to be total fabrications, and that some may even be true. Money, timber, grain, cattle, land, slaves and precious objects of gold and silver all have their part to play in Demosthenes' sorry tale of Philip's handouts.⁵³

What of the recipients of these gifts? Lacking the resources of Philip, they can scarcely have given him anything tangible that would be of comparable value, and yet they would have been under an obligation to reciprocate in some way. According to Aristotle (*Ethics* 1133a4, translated by J.A.K.Thomson in the Penguin version): 'That is why they set up a temple of the Graces in a public place to encourage the repayment of benefits; this is the distinguishing mark of gratitude because it is right to repay a service to a benefactor.' And again at 1167a17: 'A man who has received a benefit does indeed return goodwill for what has been done to him, and that is right and proper.' If Aristotle is at all typical of contemporary thinking on the subject, Philip would have expected something in return for his largesses, and his *xenoi* would have acknowledged the obligation, but whether they saw themselves simply as hirelings may be doubted. Certainly they were seen in this light by some, and not just by Demosthenes: indeed an unauthenticated anecdote in Plutarch's *Moralia* (178B) makes even Philip admit as much: 'When Lasthenes and his supporters complained with indignation that some of Philip's associates called them traitors, Philip said that the Macedonians were by nature rough and rustic people who called a spade a spade' (translation by F.C.Babbitt, Loeb).⁵⁴ They might have dismissed the charge of bribery by quoting the words of Antinoos to Penelope in the *Odyssey* (18.287) to the effect that 'it is not right to spurn a gift', and, if pressed, could have argued that Philip's money did not change their views, merely confirmed them. At

Athens, if Hyperides is to be believed,⁵⁵ acceptance of political monies—though illegal (Deinarchus 1.60, 2.17, 3.16)—was tolerated so long as it was believed to be in the national interest. Such being the case, pro-Macedonian politicians could have claimed that, since it *was* in the city's interest to be Philip's friend, acceptance of his gifts was not morally reprehensible. Another defence of such men, and along similar lines, occurs in Polybius' discussion of treachery at 18.13–15, where he objects strongly to the inclusion of pro-Macedonian leaders in Demosthenes' list of traitors (18.295). On the contrary, he maintains that their friendship with Philip, while motivated in part by honour and glory, was designed not to further their own ambition but to guarantee the freedom of their cities from outside domination.

From Philip's point of view, the motives of his *xenoi* mattered little: what did concern him was that they should be under an obligation to him, an obligation which he would call in when the time was ripe. In many cases, what he needed was information, and the intelligence he acquired through his friends in the various cities could be most helpful. Certainly a good number of such friends were little more than sycophants who provided him with such information as they thought calculated to please him, but a man of Philip's ability would surely take this into account, and the sheer size of his intelligence network would enable him to do a fair amount of cross-checking in his evaluation of the reports which reached him.

In some cases, it was the *xenos* and not Philip who first sought to make use of the tie. On two occasions we hear of guest-friends turning up at court with a request for military assistance rather than for the more usual gifts. In 348, Kallias of Chalcis wanted help to strengthen his position in Euboea (Aeschines 3.89) and in 343 Perillos of Megara asked for mercenaries for use in a projected coup (Demosthenes 19.295). Though Kallias soon fell from favour and departed in disgrace, Philip did lend Perillos some support, perhaps against his better judgement, for the proximity of Megara to Athens caused the attempted coup to be viewed there with the greatest alarm, and Philip's involvement in the affair was so harmful to his current policy of wooing the Athenians that it can only be regarded as an act of opportunism which backfired. For once, the *xenos* in Philip prevailed over the diplomat, with unfortunate results. But a blunder such as this was rare. Philip did not normally allow the ties of *xenia* to operate contrary to Macedonian interests: on the contrary, his ability to rely on the assistance of influential friends in the various cities saved him both time and effort in his attempts to win more widespread support. It is to these attempts that I now turn.

In the complicated world of the mutually antagonistic city-states, it required unusual skill to secure the goodwill of one state without at the same time upsetting its rivals. However hard Philip might try to avoid giving offence, he was soon to learn that often it simply could not be done. But a more thorough examination of the situation would have led him to the conclusion that he could afford to alienate some states more than others, and that the alienation of certain states could even win him worthwhile support elsewhere. With his customary instinct for diplomacy, he quickly came to see that the loyalty of most Peloponnesian states could be guaranteed if he set himself up in opposition to a Sparta which was currently weak, isolated and in low general esteem but which retained just enough power to

appear as a threat to her neighbours (Polybius 18.14.5–9). Involvement in the Sacred War brought even greater benefits in the shape of the archonship of the rich and populous state of Thessaly in 352 (Justin 8.2.1), the alliance of Thebes, then the strongest land power in Greece (Demosthenes 19.318, cf. Diodorus 16.59.2), a seat on the Council of the prestigious Delphic Amphictyony (Diodorus 16.60.1, Pausanias 10.8.2), a reputation for piety (Diodorus 16.1.4, 60.4, 64.3) and the heartfelt goodwill of the many Greeks shocked at the sacrilege of the Phocians who had seized the Delphic treasures (Polybius 9.33.3–6).

If Philip was able to profit from the enmity of pariahs like Sparta and Phocis, his relationship with Athens was highly ambivalent. At the beginning of his reign, it was very much in his interest to cultivate her friendship, hence his release without ransom of the Athenians captured in the abortive bid to install Argaios as king (Demosthenes 23.12) and the abandonment of his claim to Amphipolis.⁵⁶ But the interests of Philip and the Athenians were soon to clash, and he was prompt in allying with the Khalkidians when Athens declared war in 357. In order to forestall the possibility that both might gang up against him, he offered to the Khalkidians the Athenian cleruchy of Poteidaia, should it come into his hands (Diodorus 16.1.3). Current needs had dictated his switch from friendship to hostility, and when the situation changed again, his tactics were to change with it.

Aware of the risk that Athens and Thebes might one day combine against him but knowing that the friendship of both was currently unobtainable, he had been obliged to make a choice. Following his change of alignment in 357 and his participation in the Sacred War in 353, circumstances had thrown him into the Theban camp, but by 348 he began to waver. In 347, wishing to terminate the Sacred War, he sought, by a combination of cajolery and compulsion, to bring Athens to the conference table. Hints began to emanate from sources close to Philip that he now wanted the friendship of Athens even at the price of abandoning Thebes. It is true that the evidence for a genuine volte-face on Philip's part is not all that convincing. Aeschines (2.136) refers to the alarm and suspicion of the Theban representatives in the course of the diplomatic negotiations of 347/6, while Demosthenes mentions (19.19–22, 220) the claims of both Aeschines and the other Athenian envoys to have converted Philip from a friend of Thebes into a pro-Athenian. Demosthenes, in challenging the sincerity of Philip's change of front, maintains that, in order to induce the Athenians to make peace, Aeschines transformed vague remarks of Philip into specific promises which he subsequently failed to keep. But was Philip sincere in making these remarks in the first place? And, if so, why should he have concluded that it was in his interests to terminate a war with Athens which he was waging so successfully, and why, in the course of the negotiations, did he insist on an alliance with Athens instead of just a peace treaty? The most plausible explanation is surely that he was already looking forward, at least in the long term, to an attack on Persia,⁵⁷ for which an alliance with the state that had defied the might of Darius and Xerxes would be more acceptable to public opinion than the highly embarrassing understanding which he currently had with a notorious Medizer.⁵⁸ Whatever Philip's motives, the Athenians agreed to his offer of peace and alliance, but out of war-weariness rather than goodwill. Having been cheated, or so many believed, over Amphipolis in 357, they were

only too willing to ascribe to bad faith on Philip's part his subsequent refusal to distance himself from his Theban ally in the end. Buoyed up as they had been with false expectations, they found it only too easy to put all the blame on Philip's duplicity. Consequently all the effort he expended in the ensuing years on the wooing of Athens was to be of no avail. Demosthenes spoke for the majority in denying him the chance to deceive them for a third time. From Philip's point of view, his failure to conciliate Athens in 346 and the succeeding years was to cost him dear, in that it left him with no choice but to postpone his thoughts of Persian adventure for the next eight years.

Philip's failure to win over the Athenians in the later 340s seems to be but one part of a gradual decline in his run of diplomatic victories. For Demosthenes' success in gaining recruits for the Athenian-led Hellenic coalition was not entirely due to his oratory, much less to their affection for Athens. A fair proportion of the membership participated because of some recent action of Philip which was seen to be contrary to the interests of their own particular state. Corinth, for example, was alienated by the growth of Macedonian power in the north-west, her traditional sphere of interest, when he replaced Arybbas of Epirus with Olympias' brother Alexander, incorporated some of the Greek cities of Kassiopeia into the Molossian kingdom and attacked the Corinthian colony of Ambracia (Demosthenes 7.32, 9.34, 10.10; Theopompus Fragment 206J). Similarly Philip's new alliance with Aitolia (Demosthenes 48.24) angered both Akarnania, Aitolia's traditional enemy, and Akhaia, whose possession of Naupaktos on the northern shore of the Corinthian Gulf Philip acknowledged to be rightfully Aitolian (Demosthenes 9.34). From Philip's point of view the alliance with Epirus was well worth having, though whether at the price of Corinthian hostility is debatable. The Aitolian alignment however was undoubtedly more useful than the friendship of Akarnania and Akhaia, in that his new ally was of importance both as a rising military power and strategically as a useful link between northern Greece and the Peloponnese in the event of the blocking of the land route through the Isthmus of Corinth. On the other hand, the failure of Perillos' coup at Megara (Demosthenes 10.10, Plutarch, *Phocion* 15) soured relations with Philip and drove Megara into the Athenian camp (Demosthenes 18.237, Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 17.4, [Plutarch], *Moralia* 851b).⁵⁹ Clearly Philip's diplomatic skills were by now losing something of their former brilliance, and more Greeks were coming to agree with Demosthenes' claim (2.7, Loeb translation) to the effect that 'Philip has hoodwinked everyone who has had dealings with him, he has played upon the folly of each party in turn and has exploited their ignorance of his character.' This explanation of Philip's successes in Greece is shared by Theopompus (Fragment 251J), who describes him as 'completely unscrupulous in his treatment of friends and allies', and is echoed in later times by Pausanias, who accuses him (7.7.5) of 'trampling underfoot his oaths to the gods, breaking treaties and dishonouring his pledge on every conceivable occasion'. Such charges, though grossly exaggerated, provide excellent testimony to the long-running success of his diplomatic methods, and if in the end they were wearing somewhat thin, he can have had no grounds for complaint.

All he could do now was to continue his efforts to convince Athens, and public

opinion in general, that he had been maligned. When war came in 340, he left it to the Athenians to declare it (Philochorus, Fragment 55J), and though he had a *casus belli* in the seizure by Diopieithes of a Macedonian herald and the physical assault on his envoy Amphilokhos ([Demosthenes] 12.2–3), he preferred to secure his passage through Thermopylae in 339 by responding to an Amphictyonic invitation (Demosthenes 18.146–52, Aeschines 3.115–29). It was only when a reconciliation was impossible that he prepared for the showdown, and even then there are indications that he was not unwilling to negotiate.⁶⁰

The culmination of his life's work, the creation of the League of Corinth and the despatch of the advance force to Asia Minor under Parmenion and Attalos, lie outside the scope of this essay. If he hoped to combine the Greek states in an organization that would keep the peace at home and enthuse over the campaign abroad against the barbarian, his hopes were doomed to disappointment. On his death, the Athenians were to honour his assassin (Aeschines 3.160; Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 22.2), and there was trouble not just in hostile states like Thebes and Ambracia but in previously staunch allies such as Thessaly, Arcadia and Aitolia (Diodorus 17.3.3–4). The revolt of Thebes in 335 was followed by that of much of the Peloponnese in 331; the Greeks continued to intrigue with Persia so long as there was a Great King around with whom they could intrigue (Arrian, *Anabasis* 2.13.4 and 15.2, 3.24.4; Curtius 3.13.1, 6.5.6–9), and, far from being reconciled to the Macedonian hegemony, most were hoping for a Persian victory.

It has proved impossible in this essay to include for discussion every factor of relevance to the reasons for Philip's success. In the circumstances, I have concentrated on those which seem to me to be of particular significance. In conclusion, I should myself attribute his success above all to the following: the monarchical constitution of Macedonia, the foresight ascribed to him by Isocrates, which enabled him both to see from a synoptic viewpoint and to find a cure for the kingdom's manifold ills, his realization of the full economic potential of his country, his stemming of the flood of barbarian incursions, his integration of the various ethnic elements into a more harmonious whole, his creation of a virtually invincible army more than capable of dealing with any combination of the Greek or barbarian powers of the day, his ability to detect and exploit the weaknesses and dissensions which beset so many of the contemporary Greeks, his concern to win and retain the backing of Greek public opinion, and, last but by no means least, the diplomatic skills with which he was able to win and retain the support of both individual citizens and whole communities. Yet by the later 340s, his diplomacy was beginning to run out of steam, and, if he won in the end, he won only on the battlefield; for the goodwill which he had taken such pains to build up did not prove to be lasting. There was no final victory in his battle for the hearts and minds of the Greeks. In fact it would be not untrue to say that, in the end, Philip was defeated by the all-powerful traditions of the Greek city-state.

NOTES

- 1 Connor (1967); Shrimpton (1977).
- 2 For arguments in support of 360 as the date of Philip's accession, see Hatzopoulos (1982).
- 3 Historians differ on the question of whether Philip had the title of king from 359 or whether he was initially regent for his nephew Amyntas (IV), as stated by Justin (7.5.9). For arguments in support of an initial regency see Hammond and Griffith (1979) p. 651, Hammond (1989) p. 147 and (1991) p. 581. A regency is denied by Ellis (1971) and (1976) pp. 46–7; Cawkwell (1978b) p. 28; Griffith in Hammond and Griffith (1979), pp. 208–9, 702–4; Borza (1990) p. 201. A third view is upheld by Hatzopoulos (1986), who maintains that the kingship was left in abeyance for three or four years after Perdikkas' Illyrian disaster.
- 4 For accounts of Macedonia at the time of Philip's accession, see, e.g., Edson (1970) and (1981); Ellis (1976) pp. 211–44; Cawkwell (1978b) pp. 20–8; Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 141–50; Hammond (1989) pp. 71–100. For the reign of Philip's father Amyntas III, the splendid silver didrachms which he minted indicate considerable wealth, while the treaty which he concluded with the Khalcidians (Tod 111) refers to his receipt of dues of an unspecified amount. Perdikkas III on the other hand employed as his financial adviser the exiled Athenian statesman Kallistratos who devised various methods of doubling the revenues derived from harbour dues (*ellimenia*) from twenty talents per year to the still modest sum of forty ([Aristotle], *Oeconomica* 2.22).
- 5 For Macedonia as a country of barbarians, see, e.g., Thucydides 4.126.3, where Brasidas in a speech calls the Macedonians barbarians, and even in the fourth century, Demosthenes at least can still refer to Philip as a barbarian (3.16; 6.31), despite the recognition of the royal family as Greek from the time of Alexander I (Herodotus 5.22). In mythological terms, the eponymous ancestor Macedon is the son of the sister of Hellen, from whom the Greeks traced their descent ([Hesiod], *Catalogue of Women*, Fragment 7, West), a view accepted, in essentials, by e.g. Isocrates, who sees distinctions between Greeks, Macedonians and barbarians, and who seems to regard Macedonians as being not quite Greeks, but as occupying some sort of intermediate category between them and barbarians (5.154, cf. 107–8).
- 6 Many of these Upper Macedonian principalities were more Epirot than Macedonian. See Hecataeus Fragment 107J for the Orestai and Strabo 7.7.5 and 9.5.11 for Orestai, Elymiots, Tymphaians, Pelagonians and Parauvaian.
- 7 Succession in the direct line from father to son, though not necessarily to the eldest son, was the norm, but there were exceptions, whether in accordance with the wishes of the deceased king, or because of the unsuitability of the obvious candidate or due to intimidation by a rival claimant. For a detailed discussion of the Macedonian succession, see Hatzopoulos (1986), who believes that preference was normally given to the first son of the king born after his accession to the throne: should he be a minor, the kingship was left in abeyance till he came of age, while the nearest male agnate served as regent.
- 8 Thus Perdikkas II was opposed in 434 by his brother Philip, who had secured as allies the Athenians and the Upper Macedonian canton of Elymaia (Thucydides 1.57.3); Amyntas III was deposed in 393/2 and replaced by Argaios as the result of Illyrian intervention, a situation reversed a year later by the Thessalians (Diodorus

- 14.92.5). In 360/59, the death of Perdikkas III was followed by a renewal of the claim of Argaios, this time with Athenian backing (Diodorus 16.3.3–6).
- 9 For accounts of the geography and population of Macedonia in antiquity, see Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 3–18, Ellis (1976) pp. 21–44, Borza (1982) pp. 1–20 and (1990) pp. 23–57, Hammond (1989) pp. 1–15. The most detailed description of all is Cvijic (1908), with reference to the period of Turkish rule.
- 10 *Contra* Theopompus Fragment 237J. See Borza (1982) pp. 14–15, with note 39.
- 11 On timber, see especially Meiggs (1982).
- 12 On the Athenian economy in general, see Heichelheim (1958), Michell (1959), French (1964), Finley (1973), Hopper (1979). On agriculture and the countryside, see Osborne (1987); on the silver mines, see Kalcyk (1982), Hopper (1983), Osborne (1985) pp. 111–26.
- 13 Demosthenes 19.135; Diodorus 15.67.3–4, 16.2.4; Plutarch, *Pelopidas* 26.4; Aelian *V.H.* 13.7; Justin 7.5.1.
- 14 If he was sent to Thebes by his brother Alexander II (369–368), as our sources state, and remained there for three years (Justin 7.5.3), Diodorus must be in error in dating his succession to the throne soon after his escape, since we know from Athenaeus (508e) that he was assigned a portion of Macedonia by his brother, and ruled it long enough for ‘fraternal strife’ (Speusippus, *Letter to Philip* 6) to develop. On Philip’s residence at Thebes, see especially Aymard (1954) and Sordi (1975).
- 15 The only defeats known to have been suffered by Philip at the hands of a Greek army were in two engagements fought against Onomarkhos in Thessaly (Diodorus 16.35.1–2), in 354 according to Buckler (1989) pp. 58–69 and 181–6, or in 353 according to Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 259–71. Cf. Hammond (1991) pp. 57–60.
- 16 For accounts of Philip’s army in action, see Hammond (1989) pp. 100–6 and (1991) pp. 57–60. Both books have useful illustrative diagrams.
- 17 A certain Aeropos was demoted for showing excessive interest in flute girls while on campaign. Cf. the anecdote concerning Dokimos of Taras, who, according to this same passage of Polyaeus, aroused Philip’s ire for bathing in hot water, which in Macedonia was not permitted even to women when giving birth’.
- 18 Demosthenes 1.14 refers to his *philopragmosyne* (‘restless activity’), which makes it impossible to stay at peace, and at 9.50 we are told that since he makes no distinction between summer and winter he has no season set apart for inaction.
- 19 Captured in 357 (Diodorus 16.8), the city was not destroyed but some of the citizens were enslaved. It was presumably land which had belonged to those enslaved that was given to men like Metron and Nikarkhides (Arrian, *Indica* 18.5), Agathon (Curtius 5.1.43) and Pantaleon (Diodorus 17.64.3).
- 20 Captured in 354, the city had its territory distributed among the Macedonians (Diodorus 16.34.5). Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 361–2 argue for a division into relatively small holdings rather than into large estates.
- 21 Olynthus fell in 348 and was totally destroyed (Demosthenes 9.26, Diodorus 16.53.3). Of the other Khalkidian cities, only Stageira is definitely known to have been destroyed (Plutarch, *Alexander* 7.3). It was probably Khalkidian territories that were assigned to at least some of the Macedonians ‘from Anthemos’ or ‘from Apollonia’ who later served in Asia with Alexander (Arrian, *Anabasis*, 1.12.7; 2.9.3).
- 22 Amphipolis was captured by Philip in 357 (Diodorus 16.8.2). Two pro-Athenian politicians, Philon and Stratokles, are known to have been exiled at the time (Tod 156), but, since the city later gave its name to one of the squadrons of Alexander’s Companions (Arrian *Anabasis* 1.2.5), land confiscations on a much larger scale

- must have subsequently taken place. Hammond and Griffith (1979) p. 353 believe that Amphipolis later became the administrative centre of a large district which was accordingly given a more extensive territory. Individual Macedonians from Amphipolis are named as Apollodoros (Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.16.4; 7.18.1), together with Nearkhos, Laomedon and Androstenes (Arrian, *Indica* 18.4), three Companions of Greek origin who had been naturalized. Of the three Greeks, Nearkhos originated in Crete (*SIG* 266=Tod 182, Diodorus 19.69.1, Plutarch, *Eumenes* 18.3), Laomedon in Mytilene (Diodorus 17.57.3, 18.3.1 and 31.6) and Androstenes in Thasos (Strabo 16.3.2).
- 23 Among *betairoi* of Greek origin were the three named in note 22, along with Demaratos of Corinth (Arrian, *Anabasis* 1.15.6), Eumenes of Cardia (Arrian, *Anabasis* 3.4.6), Kallias of Chalcis (Aeschines 3.89) and Medeios of Larissa (Arrian, *Anabasis* 7.24.4).
- 24 In 334, Alexander took 1,800 with him to Asia and left behind an additional 1,500 in Greece (Diodorus 17.17.4–5). Presumably we should add to this figure an unspecified number sent to Asia with Parmenion and Attalos in 336 as part of the advance force (Diodorus 16.91.2).
- 25 On Philip's engineers, see especially Marsden (1969) pp. 57–62. Cf. Marsden (1977).
- 26 Though Philip had plenty of mercenaries at his disposal (Diodorus 16.8.7; Parke (1933) pp. 155–64; Griffith (1935) pp. 8–12), Anson (1985b) pp. 245–7 regards what became known in Alexander's day as the *hypaspists* as a permanent professional force of citizen troops. The extent of the increase of the Macedonian element in Philip's infantry can be worked out from the following figures: in 359/8 he had on the campaign against Bardylis 10,000 at most (Diodorus 16.4.3), presumably almost exclusively from Lower Macedonia at this early stage of his reign, but by 334, Alexander had at least 24,000 (according to Diodorus 17.17.3–5, 12,000 accompanied him to Asia, while another 12,000 were left in Europe with Antipater; additional infantrymen should be sought among the 10,000 troops who had crossed to Asia with Parmenion and Attalos (Polyaenus 5.44.4)).
- 27 The orthodox view of the powers of the Macedonian monarchy has the king's actions circumscribed by his need to obey an agreed set of customs and traditions, notably the right of the army assembly to free speech, jurisdiction in important treason trials and the final say in the election and deposition of the king. This view, developed by Granier (1931) and modified by Aymard (1950a and 1950b) and Briant (1973), has been accepted by Ellis (1976) pp. 24–5, Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 383–92 and Hammond (1989) pp. 60–70. An alternative view, which reduces the powers of the army assembly to a degree that effectively turns the king into a complete autocrat, is preferred by Errington (1974, 1978, 1983, and, more recently, 1990, pp. 218–38), Lock (1977) and Anson (1985a). On either interpretation, Philip enjoyed far more extensive powers of decision-making than were possessed by any of his Greek opponents.
- 28 On the powers of the Boiotarchs, see Buckler (1980) pp. 25–30, 76–7 and 139–42.
- 29 For a list of Philip's wives, see Satyrus *FHG* 3, 161, Fragment 5, cited by Athenaeus 13 557b–d. For a discussion, see Ellis (1976) pp. 211–12, cf. p. 302, notes 4 and 7; Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 24–5, 225, 560, 626–7; Borza (1990) pp. 206–8. See also the general remarks on Macedonian royal women in Hammond (1981a) p. 167 and (1989) pp. 31–6.
- 30 See Hornblower (1982) pp. 220–2.
- 31 For the operation of reciprocal obligation in inter-state relations, see Karavites (1980).

- 32 The failure of democratic Athens to operate at inter-state level on the basis of mutual claims of gratitude is discussed by Missiou (1992) pp. 109–39, where she argues that they were deliberately rejected as an outmoded relic of aristocracy. The sheer size of a popular assembly such as the Athenian *ecclesia* would render it far more resistant to bribery than an oligarchy, especially a narrow one. On this, see Powell (1988) chapter 7.
- 33 This portrait of Philip was painted in the first instance by the ascetic Theopompus, whose denunciation of inebriation as the worst possible type of vice suggests that he was personally something of a bigoted teetotaler. See especially Fragments 27, 162, 236 and 282J. Cf. the celebrations which were held to mark the capture of Olynthos (Demosthenes 19.192–5; Diodorus 16.55.1–2), the successful conclusion of the Sacred War (Demosthenes 19.128), the victory at Khaironeia (Diodorus 16.87; Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 20.3) and Philip's marriage to Kleopatra (Diodorus 16.91.2; Plutarch, *Alexander* 9.4–5).
- 34 Philip was fond of the theatre and his contact with actors, in an age when they could wield considerable political influence, was distinctly advantageous to him. See the general remarks in Theopompus, Fragment 236J, and for his contacts with individual actors, see Demosthenes 5.6 (Neoptolemos), 19.193–4 (Satyros); Aeschines 2.15 (Aristodemos).
- 35 For detailed accounts of the workings of Greek diplomacy, see Mosley (1973), and Adcock and Mosley (1975).
- 36 Examples of entertainment laid on by Philip for visiting envoys include those provided for the visit of Philon and other Thebans (Demosthenes 19.139–40) and for the Athenian ambassadors sent to Pella to conduct the negotiations of 346 (Demosthenes 19.166–7 and 229–31).
- 37 Athens paid her envoys an average of something like one to one and a half drachmas per day, a sum inadequate for a protracted stay abroad. The ambassadors would be expected to make good out of their own pockets any costs they incurred in excess of their allowance, in the hope of recovering at least part of their expenditure on their return. See Mosley (1973) pp. 74–6; Adcock and Mosley (1975) pp. 155–6.
- 38 It would seem that Athenians were prepared to turn a blind eye to the acceptance of gifts on a small scale, but since an ambassador, like any other magistrate, would undergo an official scrutiny (*euthyne*) at the end of his mission, the receipt of lavish gifts would expose him to the risk of prosecution for corruption or misconduct on the embassy (*parapresbeia*). See Mosley (1973) pp. 39–12.
- 39 On the fate of prisoners of war, see Pritchett (1991) pp. 203–311.
- 40 Mass releases by Philip of Athenian prisoners which are on record include those captured in 359 in the abortive attempt to install Argaios as king (Demosthenes 23.121), the kleruchs who fell into his hands at the capture of Poteidaia in 356 (Diodorus 16.8.6) and those taken captive at Khaironeia in 338 (Diodorus 16.87.3; Plutarch, *Moralia* 177e; Polyaeus 5.10.4), who amounted to some 2,000 men (Lycurgus, *Against Lysicles*, as cited by Diodorus 16.83.2; [Demades], *On the Twelve Years* 8).
- 41 Aeschines 2.12–13 (Phrynon of Rhamnos); Aeschines 2.15–16 (Iatrokles and probably Eueratos, captured at Olynthos).
- 42 E.g. Satyros (Demosthenes 19.193–4).
- 43 E.g. Antipater of Magnesia, recommended in Speusippus' *Letter to Philip*; the unnamed Athenian sent to Philip by his father Phrynon (Demosthenes 19.230–4).
- 44 E.g. Kallias of Chalcis (Aeschines 3.89); Perillos of Megara (Demosthenes 19.295).
- 45 For a detailed discussion of *xenia*, see Herman (1987).

- 46 Philip's *xenia* with Python went back to the time he spent at Thebes as a hostage (Plutarch, *Moralia* 178c).
- 47 The case of Kallias shows that not all such links of *xenia* were permanent. Another terminated guest-friendship is that contracted with Euphraios of Oreos, probably in the reign of Perdikkas III, at whose court he had attained a position of influence. Philip, however, on coming to the throne, had him expelled from Macedonia, whence he returned in disgrace to his native city, where he assumed the role of an anti-Macedonian politician (Demosthenes 9.58, Athenaeus 506e).
- 48 It may well be that some of Demosthenes' 'traitors' are listed merely because of pro-Macedonian sympathies rather than because of any formal link with Philip, but in other cases, ties of *xenia* are specifically attested.
- 49 See Herman (1987) pp. 16–29.
- 50 Herman (1987) pp. 118–30.
- 51 Among the principal sources of wealth available to Philip were the raw resources of Macedonia including silver and gold (see Le Rider 1981, Borza 1982), timber, export duties, land confiscated from conquered enemies, monies derived from the sale of booty and the ransoming of prisoners of war, and revenues obtained from Thessaly (Demosthenes 1.22, 6.22) and from Thrace (Diodorus 16.71.2), with each new military victory and territorial acquisition adding to his assets.
- 52 Theopompus Fragment 27J; Hyperides 4.29; Diodorus 16.8.7, 53.3, 54.3–4, 55.4; Cicero, *Ad Atticum* 1.67; Horace, *Odes* 3.16.13; Valerius Maximus 7.2.10; Plutarch, *Demosthenes* 14.2, *Aemilius Paulus* 12.5, *Moralia* 178b; Pausanias 7.10.3. Cf. the alleged oracle said by the Souda to have promised victory to Philip if he fought with silver spears.
- 53 Demosthenes 18.41 (estates); 19.139–40 (money, slaves, gold and silver objects); 19.145 (houses, timber, grain, estates); 19.167 (money); 19.195 (slaves); 19.265 (timber, cattle, sheep, horses); 19.306–9 (slaves).
- 54 Cf. the apocryphal comments of Agis II of Sparta at Plutarch, *Moralia* 215D. The editor of this collection draws my attention to the similar story of the turncoat American general Benedict Arnold, who betrayed a chain of forts on the Hudson to the British during the American War of Independence. Years later, in London, when the general was introduced to a grateful George III, 'Ah yes,' said the king, 'the traitor Arnold!'
- 55 Hyperides 5.25: 'You give full permission to the orators and generals to reap substantial rewards. It is not the laws which grant this privilege but your tolerance and generosity. But on one point you insist: your interests must be furthered, not opposed by the money they receive' (translated by J.O.Burt, Loeb).
- 56 The abandonment of Philip's claim to Amphipolis is recorded by Diodorus (16.4.1), but whether he went so far as to recognize the Athenian claim to the city, as Demosthenes (2.6; 7.27; 23.16) would have us believe, is uncertain. De Ste. Croix (1963) pp. 110–19 strongly denies that Philip admitted the Athenian claim, but the Athenians' decision to conclude an alliance with him at the time is more understandable if they believed that he did. It may have been wishful thinking on their part, perhaps encouraged by ambiguous remarks which in fact committed him to nothing. At all events, whatever he may or may not have promised, he kept the place when it came into his hands, and the Athenians, rightly or wrongly, felt cheated.
- 57 On this, see Ellis (1976) pp. 128–30; Cawkwell (1978b) pp. 111–13; Hammond and Griffith (1979) pp. 458–63. Buckler (1989) p. 147 is sceptical, at least with regard to the short term, and Errington (1990) p. 88 denies that Philip showed any interest in

- Persia till after Khaironeia. Certainly Diodorus (16.60.5) states quite explicitly that Philip had plans for a war with Persia as early as 346, and while they could be dismissed as a bad guess by Diodorus which he inferred from the date of Isocrates' *Philippus*, which was sent in this year and advocated this very policy, Isocrates himself in his letter to Philip of 338 (*Epistle* 3.3) states that, in his opinion, the *Philippus* had been despatched to a man who had already made up his mind.
- 58 See Ellis (1976) for the view that Philip's offer to terminate his friendship with Thebes was sincere and that it was only Athenian recalcitrance which led him to abandon the idea.
- 59 For details and discussion, see Legon (1981) pp. 290–5.
- 60 Plutarch (*Demosthenes* 18.3; *Phocion* 16.1) refers to feelers put out after the conclusion of the Athenian alliance with Thebes, but this may be no more than an exaggeration of Aeschines' assertion (3.148–9) that Philip wanted peace and was on the point of sending envoys. If envoys were actually sent, Aeschines would surely have said so, and gone on to blame Demosthenes for spurning them.

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THE GREEKS IN THE WEST AND THE HELLENIZATION OF ITALY



Kathryn Lomas

One of the most striking features of Greek history is the pervasive influence of Greek culture, not just as a result of the diaspora of the eighth and seventh centuries, which created colonies of Greeks in areas as distant as Italy, Spain, southern France, Syria, Turkey and the Crimea, but as part of a process of cultural diffusion which deeply affected the history of the entire Mediterranean region. Hellenism and Hellenization were complex entities, but nevertheless embraced a huge diversity of local political systems and socio-economic cultures within a framework which remained recognizably Greek from Asia Minor to Spain. This cultural unity and the geographical extent of the Greek world ensures that the diffusion of Hellenism and the cultural interactions between Greek and non-Greek cultures are central, not just to our understanding of Greek history, but also to our understanding of the entire Mediterranean world.

Given this pervasiveness, it is perhaps curious that the Greeks themselves had little concept of Greek nationality above and beyond the city-state. Their ethnicity was not defined in political terms but by a strong sense of cultural identity which partitioned the world into two categories—Greeks and barbarians.¹ This perceptual division into ‘us’ and ‘them’ is defined by Gellner as a concept of ethnicity characteristic of pre-modern agrarian states,² but it cannot be taken at face value as a comment on acculturation and the nature of Hellenism. The hard political realities of the rise of Macedon, then of Rome, to dominance forced a re-evaluation of this basic dichotomy, as Strabo makes clear. In any case, acculturation is an infinitely more complex process which operates in different ways, at different speeds and with different effects according to context. It is also a reciprocal process. On the fringes of the Greek world, Greek and indigenous communities exchanged population and cultural influences. The Greek colonies of southern Italy provide a perfect example of the complexities of cultural interaction between Greeks and non-Greeks. On the periphery of both Greek and Italic worlds, they had a central role in mediating between the two, a role which was to take on increased cultural and political importance with the expansion of Roman power in both Italy and the eastern Mediterranean.

Even before the issue acquired such an acute political focus acculturation was a significant phenomenon in southern Italy. There is increasing evidence that despite

the hostilities which dominate most ancient accounts of Graeco-Italic relations, cross-cultural exchanges were an important feature of the development of the region. It is also evident that acculturation was by no means one-way traffic. There can be little doubt that Italic culture modified the development and behaviour of the Greek states, just as the Greeks did those of their Italian neighbours. Rather than 'Hellenization', it seems truer to speak of the formation of a cultural *koine*.³

In addition, there is the important question of Rome and its relationship with the Greeks. Greek contacts had been evident in central Italy from an early date, but from the third century BC, their influence on the development of Rome became more pervasive. By the first century BC, there was a strong tendency among the Roman elite to accord a privileged status to all things Greek, but also a strong element of ambiguity in attitudes to Hellenism. Inevitably, this ambivalence shaped Roman relations with Greek areas, including southern Italy. Although the main phase of Hellenization in Rome was triggered by the conquest of the eastern Mediterranean in the second century and was the result of direct contacts with Greece, there were senses in which the cities of Magna Graecia acted as cultural mediators between the Greek and Roman worlds. The privileging of Greek culture over other cultures encountered by Rome, both within Italy and beyond, also provided a means by which the Italiote Greeks could reconcile the political realities of conquest and, ultimately, incorporation into the Roman body politic, with civic and cultural traditions. Greek elements were an important part of civic identity for Italiote cities for several centuries after their conquest by Rome, and also served to smooth relations with the ruling Roman élite.⁴

Clearly, acculturation in southern Italy is a complex process, which may imply many different things according to context. There are also enormous problems in studying it because the terms 'Hellenization' and 'Romanization' are suggestive of value judgements on relative levels of cultural sophistication between Greek and Roman cultures on the one hand, and other Italian cultures on the other. In a recent paper, Whitehouse and Wilkins described Hellenization as a 'weak concept' and one which carries too much intellectual baggage to be useful in describing ethnic interactions.⁵ However, it remains an important element in both the historical and archaeological records and in the modern scholarly tradition; it therefore requires examination.

This chapter aims to highlight the ways in which Greek culture was manipulated and the effect of political circumstances on its transmission. For this purpose, I will consider two main periods of history, giving insight into different aspects of cultural interchange in Italy—the fourth and third centuries BC and the first and second centuries AD. It may seem illogical to omit the intervening centuries, during which Rome was exposed on a large scale to Greek culture. However, in the context of southern Italy, there are good reasons for doing so. First, the subject of the Hellenization of Rome in the second and first centuries BC is one which has generated an enormous volume of literature.⁶ It was also a period in which Hellenization was increasingly the result of contacts with the Greek East rather than southern Italy. Finally, it is a period for which there are few sources relating to Magna Graecia, making it difficult to produce any evaluation of Italiote history. These chronological parameters also

contrast the processes of Hellenization in southern Italy in the fourth century and the very different situation which pertained in the early empire.

THE FOURTH CENTURY BC: THE GRAECO-ITALIC *KOINE*

The fourth century BC is of great interest for the study of acculturation, as it witnessed an upsurge in cultural exchanges between Greeks and Italians, but also intense conflict. The Oscan peoples who had pushed southwards in the fifth century—the Campani, Lucani and Bruttii—were firmly established in southern Italy and posed a problem for the Greeks since they were vigorously expansionist.⁷ There was also a need to guard Greek territory from the less aggressive, but still problematic, Messapian peoples of south-east Italy. Further destabilizing factors were the intrusive interest of Syracuse, which culminated in domination of Calabria,⁸ and the increasing power of Rome. To add to an already complicated picture, there was dissent among the Greeks themselves. Whilst Syracuse controlled Calabria, her ally, Tarentum, established hegemony over the rest of the Italiote League, a confederation of Italiote Greek cities, which was extended to the Syracusan protectorate after the fall of Dionysios II. Relations within the League were stormy, with frequent realignments between groups of states and recourse by Tarentum to mercenary generals—free-lance commanders from Greece and Epirus whose role was to pursue campaigns against Italian enemies and dissenting Greeks.⁹

Despite this unpromising scenario, Graeco-Italic contacts flourished. Our source material, however, presents problems. Literary sources are sporadic and have an anti-Tarentine bias,¹⁰ but are sufficient to give an outline of events, albeit heavily oriented towards the Greeks. They include very little about the Italians. Their history, culture, social and political development, where it does not touch on the history of the Greeks, must be inferred or derived from archaeological evidence.¹¹

Acculturation is not an isolated phenomenon. The fourth century was also a period of major change in other respects, as reflected in the archaeological record. The rapid expansion of the Oscan peoples involved ethnic changes. Population density increased, and the number of urban centres multiplied. These are less obvious in Calabria, although some Lucanian sites, e.g. Serra di Vaglio and Roccagloriosa, undergo rapid expansion and rebuilding in the fourth and third centuries.¹² Campania was already highly urbanized and the Oscan conquest involved little change to this pattern.¹³ The trend was most marked in Apulia. From the sixth century, smaller sites began to coalesce into larger, heavily fortified, units—probably large villages rather than cities at this stage. By the fourth century, many had reached the zenith of their growth. The general pattern is one of increasing settlement size and centralization of population throughout the sixth and fifth centuries.¹⁴ At Oria, surveys show the disappearance of small settlements and the increasing size and sophistication of those which remain. Cemeteries become larger, huts are replaced by tiled houses and wheel-thrown pottery of Greek and local manufacture is found. Many other Apulian sites show a similar pattern. At Ordona, the inhabited areas reached a maximum in the fourth century but contracted during the period after the second Punic War to only 20 hectares.¹⁵

Signs of contact with the Greeks are plentiful. Greek pottery and other goods are widely found on Italic sites in southern Italy from the seventh to sixth centuries, but by the fourth century, the process has moved well beyond the trading of Greek goods and skills.¹⁶ Increasing size of cities is accompanied by changes in structure which reflect Greek influence, and imply profound socio-economic changes. Many, such as Caelia Peucetia, Valesium, Cavallino, Monte Sannace and Gnathia in Apulia, and Serra di Vaglio and Roccagloriosa in Lucania, adopted a regular street plan similar to that of Greek cities.¹⁷ Monte Sannace and Gnathia acquired a separately fortified acropolis. The development of an acropolis and a street grid at Gnathia are accompanied by the construction of a colonnaded agora and a number of public buildings. Private houses reflect a greater degree of social and economic stratification, with an increasing number of larger and more elaborately decorated houses, often using Greek styles and architectural forms.¹⁸

Evidence for Hellenization in religious life is less clear-cut. A fourth-century Greek temple near Canusium, probably dedicated to Athena, shows Tarentine influence in both construction and decoration.¹⁹ Messapic inscriptions show that Greek cults were adopted in Messapian cities. Epitaphs from Valesium, Gnathia and other sites commemorate priestesses of Demeter, and a cult of Aphrodite existed at Caelia Messapica and Oria. Other cults attested include those of Apollo, Artemis and Hermes.²⁰ However, the names of priests and priestesses are Messapian, not Greek, which suggests assimilation of Greek cults by the Italic population. We know little about Messapic religion, but in Lucania and Calabria there are inscriptions relating to Oscan cults, notably that of Mefitis at Rossano di Vaglio, which suggest that the religious life of southern Italy was only partially influenced by Hellenism.²¹

Other aspects of culture, however, were closely related to Greek models. Although the indigenous languages were Messapic and Oscan, the Greek alphabet was widely used as the means for writing both of these, despite the fact that the Oscans of Samnium and Campania evolved their own alphabet.²² The Greek language was occasionally used by the non-Greeks of the south. A cuirass is inscribed, in Greek characters, with the name of Novios Bannios, a Hellenized Oscan name. More significantly, the fourth-century additions to the walls at Serra di Vaglio, which use Greek isodomic masonry, are inscribed ‘ἐπὶ τῆς Νυμμέλου ἀρχῆς’ (‘during the rule (*arkhe*) of Nummelos’). This inscription has provoked much debate. It has been argued that Nummelos was an Oscan mercenary employed by the Greeks, but there are problems in regarding *arkhe* as military command, and it seems more likely that he was a civil magistrate. If this is the case, a magistrate who is clearly Oscan chose to commemorate his works in Greek. It is impossible to determine whether Nummelos had adopted the Greek title of *arkhon* or whether this inscription hides the Oscan office of *meddix*. A third-century Oscan inscription from Muro Lucano provides a parallel. This uses the Greek alphabet, and reads ‘Μαῖς Ἀρρίεσ σουΦεν μεδδικεν’ (‘Maius Arrius, in his term as *meddix*’).²³ Like the Nummelos inscription, it commemorates repairs in isodomic masonry to fortifications and implies that *arkhe* is the equivalent of *meddiken*—i.e. a term for magisterial authority derived from a magisterial title. The Nummelos inscription, therefore, indicates a significant, and public, statement of Hellenization among the Oscan elite, and possibly the adoption of Greek magistracies. The only phenomenon which seems to owe its existence entirely to Greek influence is that of coinage. Prior to the fourth century BC, there is

no monetary economy in southern Italy outside the Greek colonies, most of which were minting coins by the sixth century. During the fourth century, however, a considerable number of coins were issued by Messapian and Oscan cities, all closely based on Greek models. Once again, there is a considerable regional variation. Apulia and the Salentine peninsula have a high density of coin production. Many cities minted coins, all using Greek legends and deriving their types from Greek models.²⁴ The Daunian cities of northern Apulia were less prolific in this respect.²⁵ Coinage seems to be closely linked with the level of urbanization. In Calabria, which was considerably less urbanized, only a small number of communities minted coins and these were all located firmly in the Greek sphere of influence. The most notable were Petelia and Pandosia, which minted coins related to those of Croton.²⁶

So far, discussion has centred on Apulia, Lucania and Calabria, with little consideration of Hellenization in Campania, for the simple reason that there are major differences in the type and quantity of evidence. The situation in Campania is less clear-cut, partly because of lack of evidence. Many of the major cities of the region have been continuously inhabited since antiquity and have medieval and modern street plans superimposed on all, or part, of the ancient city.

In general, Greek influence was strong in the coastal areas. In central and southern Campania, the Greek *polis* became the model of urbanism from the seventh century, under the influence of the Greeks and the Etruscans, who dominated the region and whose own urban development shows strong Greek and Phoenician influence.²⁷ The inland areas are considerably less Hellenized, and also less urbanized, as was the Auruncan and Volscian territory in northern Campania before the Roman colonizations of the fourth century.²⁸ In the Apennine region of inland Campania, Oscan influence was paramount, as illustrated by language, alphabet and coinage, unlike the southern part of the region, where the Campanians had assimilated many aspects of Greek culture.

One of the propositions advanced earlier in this chapter was that acculturation was a multilateral process, involving Italic influence on the Greeks as well as Hellenization of the Italians. This influence appears in a number of forms. As in many colonial situations, a certain amount of religious syncretism occurs. Native cults are absorbed into the Greek pantheon, often Hellenized as sirens or nymphs, or as attributes of an Olympian deity. The sirens Parthenope and Leukothea, the object of cults at Naples and Velia, probably represent Hellenizations of pre-Greek cults.²⁹ Assimilated Italic cults are frequently associated with natural features. Sebethos (Naples) and Krathis (Croton) were river gods, while Pandina appears on the coins of Pandosia as a Hellenized water-nymph.³⁰ Taras, the mythical founder of Tarentum, was possibly an assimilated local deity, adopted as co-founder with the Spartan Phalanthos.³¹

More tangibly, Greek cities adopted Italians into the citizen body, and sometimes into the elite. The Greek Table of Herakleia, dating to the third century, includes a Messapian name—Dazimos Pyrrhou—in the list of officials who drew up the document, relating to the landholdings of the sanctuary of Demeter.³² At a later date, second-century inscriptions from the Aegean refer to Titos Titou and his children (most of whom have Greek names) from Herakleia, and the Tarentines Demetrios Dazou, Parmenion Dazymou and Numerics Leontos.³³ The process is corroborated by Strabo.³⁴ He comments that the repercussions of the Oscan invasion of Campania

can be seen even in the adoption of Oscans into the Neapolitan elite and claims that *demarkbos* lists showed that Oscans were elected as *demarkboi* in the fourth century. Livy mentions that in 326/5, the leaders of the pro-Roman faction were Kharilaos, a Greek, and the Oscan Nymphios.³⁵

In this case, Naples remained primarily a Greek city, but the reverse can be seen at Cumae and Paestum. Both cities fell to the Oscans in the fifth century, suffering, according to the ancient sources, devastation and slaughter or enslavement of the Greek population.³⁶ Other evidence, however, undermines these bloodthirsty accounts. At Paestum, there is no sign of mass destruction in the archaeological record and the Greek life of the city adapts gradually, rather than undergoing any sudden disruption, until the foundation of the Latin colony in 273 BC.³⁷ Cumae, on the other hand, was sacked, and there were Cumaean refugees in Naples as late as 327. The city was Oscanized, and then incorporated by Rome as *civis sine suffragio*, but Strabo comments that it still had Greek characteristics.³⁸

Signs of Italic influence appear at Tarentum, whose topography is similar to that of Messapian cities and differed from that of other Greek colonies. It is located on low-lying ground, like most cities in southern Apulia, so the acropolis was a fortified area within the city, not a naturally defensible location. It also had a very large enclosed area (510 Ha.) which was only partially inhabited—a topographical feature typical of Apulian settlements³⁹—the uninhabited area being used, in part, for burials. This is particularly striking since most Greek cities had a strong taboo against locating cemeteries within the city boundaries. Some historians⁴⁰ have assumed that this peculiarity is derived from Sparta, but given the local tradition of cemeteries within the city walls, it seems more likely to be due to Messapian influence.

Although this chapter aims to provide only a brief survey of the evidence, several observations can be made about acculturation in southern Italy. First, both geographical and socio-economic boundaries are discernible. Reception and transmutation of Greek culture vary between different areas and different social groups. In Campania, there is a division between central and southern Campania, and the northern and eastern parts of the region. Some areas had been subjected to considerable Greek influence during the seventh to fifth centuries, and urbanism in Campania was deeply influenced by the Greek *polis*, both by direct contact and via the Etruscans, but the northern and eastern parts of the region had fewer Greek contacts and show a very different cultural and political tradition. In contrast, Hellenism in the Mezzogiorno exercises much more influence in the fourth century, a time of instability during which Greek influence becomes both more apparent and more deeply embedded in the fabric of society.

This paradox, that Hellenization is a less dynamic force in a region where there is less conflict between Greeks and Italians and a greater degree of socio-political cohesion than in a region where conflict is endemic, makes Hellenism a difficult phenomenon to assess. As modern conflicts between ethnic/cultural groups have shown, a situation of actual or potential conflict may involve the hardening of cultural boundaries as an affirmation of solidarity against the ‘otherness’ of the outsiders. The answer may lie, at least in part, in the difference between ancient and modern concepts of ethnicity and nationality. The Greeks were a heterogeneous group in their origins or interests, held together by a sense of common culture but

fragmented and often at odds in their dealings with each other. In this context, Greek cities maintained peaceful relations with some Italians for much of the time, even while others were in a state of conflict, thus leaving open channels for cultural contact.⁴¹

The fluidity of the process is reflected in its multilateral nature, which is particularly clear in the Hellenization of south-east Italy. Urban units incorporated Greek influences, but the results remained distinctively Messapic. The cities of Apulia are not Greek clones, but represent a regional form of urbanization which differs from the *polis*.⁴² Clearly, this was not simply a case of cultural imperialism, nor were the Italic cultures of southern Italy swamped by Hellenization. Although they took on board aspects of Hellenism, they retained their own distinct identity.

Influences come to bear on the cultural history of Apulia from other sources. The ports of the Salentine peninsula had independent contacts with Epirus and western Greece, exposing them to Greek influences of a different type, unmediated by the Italiotes.⁴³ Illyrian contacts had been a significant factor since the Bronze Age. The material culture and funerary art (in particular the so-called Daunian *stelai*) of the region shows strong Illyrian influence. The Messapian language is also closely related to Illyrian.⁴⁴ By the fourth century, what seems to be emerging is not a case of Greek cultural imperialism, but a new stage in the formation of a cultural *koine* which dates back to at least the Bronze Age, incorporating Greek, Messapic and Illyrian elements.

Aside from regional variations, there are social differences in the transmission of culture. Without the documentation to examine popular culture effectively, study of any ancient society tends to focus on elite culture, the 'greater tradition' rather than the 'lesser tradition', therefore creating a bias.⁴⁵ The distribution of Greek, or Greek-influenced, artefacts, particularly pottery, suggests that a wide social range of people must have come into contact with Greek culture in its most material aspect. However, although this may give us interesting information about trade networks and exchange of goods, it tells us very little about the wider effects of acculturation; why, and under what circumstances, Greek culture was adopted; and what it was used for. Elite interaction, however, tells us a little more, and many of the examples discussed above are clearly elite-generated. Developments involving construction of public buildings and changes to the structure of a city must be generated either by wealthy, high-status individuals, or by a central authority, and also imply considerable surplus capital on the part of individuals or the state, since building and civic remodelling on this scale does not come cheap. There are traces of increasing socio-economic differentiation in the archaeological record, reflected in growing inequalities of size and elaboration in tombs and houses. Thus increasing levels of Hellenization coincide with a period of urban growth, both economically and demographically, and the emergence of a more highly stratified and elite-dominated society.

HELLENISM AND ROME: SOUTHERN ITALY AD 14–200

The circumstances of the first and second centuries AD are very different from those which pertained in the fourth century BC. Southern Italy was no longer

composed of independent states, linked into a system of loose-knit leagues and shifting alliances. Instead there was a single pre-eminent power, Rome, which dominated all interstate relationships and controlled or influenced many aspects of public life. Even before 90 BC, an increasing level of Roman settlement in the south introduced major structural changes within cities affected by colonial foundations and an influx of new population.⁴⁶ After 90 BC, the extension of Roman citizenship to the whole of Italy involved the region in a series of even more profound changes. Although cities retained some local autonomy, they were obliged to accept Roman law and to restructure public life to correspond to Roman norms.⁴⁷ Clearly this did not happen as a single act, and there is much doubt over the actual mechanisms of change, but in the long term, cities adopted Roman social and political customs and Roman law. The municipal or colonial charters which constituted the basis for legal recognition of civic status and for regulating the day-to-day existence of cities prescribed the duties of the elected magistrates of a city, and of its senate, thus remodelling civic politics and administration along Roman lines.⁴⁸

There are signs that initially these incorporated existing local institutions and that Latin terminology frequently hid Italian realities. In Campania, for instance, many cities adopted the praetorship as their chief magistracy, rather than the college of *duumviri* or *quattuorviri*. These, which may have been Oscan *meddices* under another title, later disappear in favour of a duoviral or quattuorviral constitution. Local survivals tended to decline in most regions of Italy during the first century BC.⁴⁹ By the time Augustus reorganized Italy into eleven regions, local political structures had largely vanished.⁵⁰

Other changes were made possible, such as the absorption of Italian aristocrats into the Roman elite, although this was slow to happen. Latin became the common language throughout Italy, and other languages tend to disappear from the epigraphic record,⁵¹ and even from spoken use, during the first century. Oscan falls out of normal usage shortly after the Social War, although there are traces of later survival, and Etruscan became a dead language, known only to a small number of scholars.⁵² This Romanization of language was accompanied by the abandonment of many pre-Roman cult centres, in particular those associated with rural rather than urban cults. The social structures of cities evolved to resemble that of Rome, and Roman influence is evident even in urban topography, with the construction of Roman *fora* in most cities, the addition of Roman cults and their temples, and the appearance of specifically Roman building types and construction techniques.⁵³

This pattern of disappearance of local cultures and their replacement by a more homogeneous Roman culture poses something of a problem for study of the Greek cities. The reason lies in two factors—a small but significant body of evidence suggesting that Greek culture did survive in some cities of southern Italy until the second century AD, and the important role played by Hellenism within Roman culture. The impact of Greek culture first becomes evident during the second century BC, as a result of the Roman conquest of the Greek East, and the increase in trade between Italy and the Greek world. Contact was not, however, confined to exchange of consumer goods, but came also to signify a particular set of intellectual values and way of life.⁵⁴ Although Greek influence began to trickle down the social scale and become ‘internalized’—to use Paul Zanker’s phrase—as a result of Augustus’ adoption of

classicizing Greek imagery as an idiom for his propaganda, Hellenism was, for the most part, an elite phenomenon.⁵⁵ These aspects of the Hellenization of Roman culture have, however, generated a large body of literature and are outside the scope of this chapter. What is more relevant to the way Hellenism and Romanization inter-reacted and to the social and political exploitation of culture within Italy is the experience of the Greek states of the South under Roman rule.

The most direct comment in ancient literature on acculturation is that of Strabo,⁵⁶ who says that only Tarentum, Naples and Rhegium, of the Italiotes, remained Greek. The rest had become barbarians, and ultimately, Romans, since the Lucanians and Campanians had themselves become Romans. There is some debate about the ultimate source of this passage, and suggestions that it refers not to the first century AD but to the fourth century BC, having been taken from an earlier author. However, it matches the situation in Strabo's own day fairly well.⁵⁷ Later sources make only passing references to the cities of the Mezzogiorno, but epigraphic evidence is plentiful, and illustrative of the nature of Hellenism in the early empire. By this date, some cities were in decline and others did not have a flourishing epigraphic tradition, but those which did include Tarentum, Croton, Locri, Rhegium, Vibo, Paestum, Velia, Naples and Cumae. Of these, the three which are of greatest interest for the question of Hellenism are Rhegium, Velia and Naples. Tarentum, which is also named by Strabo, does not, but this does not necessarily invalidate Strabo's claim, for reasons which will be explained below.

Epigraphy is inevitably affected by patterns of excavation, and of recovery and survival of inscriptions, but shows enough consistency to suggest that important trends can be recognized. By examining decrees of the local senate, records of religious festivals and of individual acts of euergetism, it is possible to gain some insight into how acculturation was exploited by municipal élites.

Initially, the epigraphic profile of these three cities seems remarkably similar to that of any other city in Italy, with a high proportion of epitaphs, but a significant minority of building inscriptions and other euergetic texts, inscriptions in honour of prominent citizens or Roman dignitaries, dedications and inscriptions relating to religious cults. The chronological range of the evidence is quite restricted, most inscriptions dating between the first and third centuries AD, with a diminishing number from the fourth century.⁵⁸

This body of inscriptions shows a significant language choice. As already noted, many regional languages had died out in Italy, but Greek is a notable exception. In one sense, this is hardly surprising, since Greek and Latin both had the status of a *lingua franca* around the Mediterranean, and Greek was very much the language of the educated elite. In another sense, however, its survival is very surprising, since Latin was indisputably the dominant language in Italy and the western empire, and Greek was essentially a literary language for the elite, not something which was in day-to-day use.⁵⁹ Still less is it to be expected in an Italian city as a language for official business or for inscriptions relating to its conduct. Nevertheless, this is precisely what we find. The majority of funerary inscriptions in the cities under discussion—Naples, Velia and Rhegium—are Latin. In all cases, there is a minority of Greek epitaphs, mostly of those of humble social and economic backgrounds.⁶⁰ Epitaphs which are obviously high-status are invariably Latin.

The majority of inscriptions of the categories which we would expect to be the preserve of Latin—records of important state cults, decrees of the local senate or assembly and inscriptions relating to other civic bodies—are in fact in Greek. They also display a strange mixture of Greek and Roman conventions in both form and content, and are, on the evidence of personal names, set up by a non-Greek elite. The issue, therefore, is not simply of language choice and what it signifies, but also of the role of Greek magistracies, still apparently surviving up to 250 years after the enfranchisement of Italy, as well as Greek cults and festivals and Greek kinship groups, all apparently promoted by a Roman, or Romanized, elite. The problem, indicated above, in excluding Tarentum from the group of cities which retained elements of Greek culture, lies in the fact that there is no directly comparable evidence from Tarentum. Tarentine epigraphy is typical of most Italian cities, in that most of it is funerary, but there are no surviving civic decrees of the type which provide the principal evidence for Hellenism elsewhere.

The largest body of inscriptions is a group of Greek decrees of the *boule* and/ or *ekklesia* at Naples, but there are similar texts from Velia and *cursus* inscriptions from both cities contain corroborating evidence of features of Greek civic life. The examples from Velia are relatively straightforward, in that they are all euergetic decrees honouring individuals, of a type which is common in the Greek world from the Hellenistic period onwards. One, in honour of G. Julius Naso, is bilingual, translating the Greek formula ‘ἀρετῆς καὶ εὐεργετίας ἕνεκα’ as a decree of the senate ‘honoris causa’.⁶¹ The other, which is very fragmentary, is in Greek only and uses the same formula.⁶²

Latin *cursus* inscriptions, which list the public offices held by an individual, also indicate Greek influence. They reveal that although Velia had a Romanized constitution, with a structure including *quaestors*, *aediles*, *quattuorvirs* and *duumvirs*, it also apparently included a *gymnasiarkhos* and a very problematic character, the *pholarkhos*, offices which were contemporary with the Romanized structure.⁶³ A similar pattern occurs in the inscriptions from Rhegium. A series of nine Greek inscriptions connected with the cult of Apollo, and maybe that of Artemis, record sacrifices made, listing the names of magistrates and cult officials present on each occasion.⁶⁴ As well as the priests, their attendants and the various butchers, cooks and musicians who participated, the inscriptions include the *prytanis* and *synprytaneis*, prominently positioned at the head of the list. The members of the elite are distinguished from the rest, many of whom would have been slaves, by their Roman *tria nomina*.⁶⁵

The confusion deepens when inscriptions from Naples are taken into account. Here, there is a complex and idiosyncratic group of Greek survivals, with Roman and Greek magistracies apparently running in parallel. Literary sources name the chief magistrate of pre-Roman Naples as the *demarkhos*, and state that this office was still extant in the reign of Hadrian.⁶⁶ Inscriptions, however, include the offices of *arkhon* and *antarkhon* as well as *demarkhos* and *laukelarkhos*. There is nothing to indicate the spheres of activity of any of these magistrates, although decrees of the *boule* and *eskleto* seem to have been piloted through by the *arkhon* and *antarkhon*.⁶⁷ Attempts to equate these four offices with Roman *quattuorviri* are not convincing, but it is difficult to see how the various elements could fit into any known Greek constitutional pattern, particularly since this series of inscriptions, all dating to the late first and

early second centuries AD, are the only evidence for the existence of an *arkhon* at Naples.⁶⁸

It is not impossible that these disparate elements represent survivals, or even revivals, of magistracies from various stages of Naples' history, but there is no corroborative evidence. Suggestions that the posts of *arkhon* and *antarkhon* were created as part of an oligarchic reform after the coup of 326 BC are plausible but merely speculation.⁶⁹ Perhaps the best approximation on the available evidence is that the *arkhon* and *antarkhon* are translations of Roman titles—*quattuorvir* or *duumvir*—but the *demarkhos* and *laukelarkhos* are Greek survivals, not corresponding to any element of the Roman system.

In all cases discussed so far, Greek magistracies only appear in an honorific or ceremonial context, and this seems significant. Unlike the Roman *duoviri* or *quattuorviri* who existed in all these cities, Greek posts seem to have been concerned with the ceremonial aspects of civic life, not with day-to-day administration. This suggests that the role of Hellenism was to reinforce these aspects of civic life, which were connected with the creation of a collective civic identity.

Other factors bear out this interpretation. The granting of civic magistracies to emperors as a form of honour came to be fairly routine, both in Italy and the Greek East. Hadrian received several other honorific magistracies in addition to the grant by Naples, and honorary duovirates were conferred on Nero and Domitian by Pompeii.⁷⁰ Similarly, some of the Greek offices listed above seem to have changed their nature. Rhegium, Naples and Velia all had an office of *gymnasiarkhos* which had become part of the civic *cursus*.⁷¹ His function is not known, but in the eastern empire, *gymnasiarkhoi* enjoyed a prominent place in the civic hierarchy and were engaged in organizing the *ephebeia* and agonistic festivals.⁷² The *prytanis* and *synprytaneis* at Rhegium clearly had a ceremonial role. The office of *pholarkhos*, at Velia, was originally connected with the healing cult of Apollo Oulios. A series of four statues connected with the cult carry Greek inscriptions naming the portraits and identifying them as *pholarkhoi*, and there is a fragmentary inscription honouring a *pholarkhos*. However, the title also occurs in a Latin *cursus* inscription, listed alongside the offices of *aedile* and *quattuorvir*.⁷³ Clearly, *pholarkhoi* enjoyed high status, and this Greek office or priesthood came to form part of the Romanized civic *cursus*.

Other features of the Greek inscriptions from Naples indicate that this is a very different form of Hellenism from that of the classical past, and one which was deeply influenced by the Roman context in which it developed. As already noted, the Greek decrees were used for a specific purpose. They are all concerned with honouring some member of the local or Roman elite, not with the day-to-day conduct of public life. Many of the texts are in the form of the Hellenistic *proxenos* decree, but some of the Neapolitan examples are rather more specific. These are a series of decrees of public mourning on the death of a prominent citizen, expressing grief on the part of the *boule*, condolences to the families of the deceased, and praise of the dead, and granting a funeral, tomb and other memorials at public expense.⁷⁴ As an epigraphic type, these are much rarer in the Hellenistic world than other types of honorific decree. Many of their features—voting of commemorative statues and tombs decorated with inscribed shields—are common in the Latin funerary tradition and are found in all parts of Italy. The purely honorific parts of these decrees, however, couch these Roman honours in language drawn from Hellenistic models. For

instance, Tettia Kasta, a priestess, is described ‘*γυναικὸς φιλοτιμησαμένης εἰς τε τὴν τῶν ἀπάντων εὐσέβειαν καὶ εἰς τῆς πατρίδος εὐνοίαν*’ as ‘(a woman who took pride in her universal piety and her goodwill towards the city)’ and later as a *euergetes* (benefactor) of the city, all features found in Greek honorific decrees.⁷⁵ A Greek idiom is, therefore, being used as a vehicle to convey honours which are not, in themselves, very different from those found in cities of purely Italic tradition, but are, by this means, being presented as part of the Hellenic tradition of Naples.

Another Greek feature of civic life at Naples which seems to have undergone a revival is that of the phratry. As the name suggests, phratries probably originated as kinship groups, like those at Athens. Twelve have been identified at Naples, mostly with names which suggest an archaic origin,⁷⁶ although two, the *Kumaioi* and *Antinoittai*, can be related to later periods of history.⁷⁷ Despite the apparent early origins, the only evidence for the phratries dates to the first to third centuries AD, by which time they had moved away from their original function. In many respects, they behaved like Roman *collegia*, with their own meeting houses, cults, festivals and elected officials, the *phratrarkhoi*. Inscriptions describe gifts, often valuable, offered to the phratries and their cults, ranging from new buildings erected by wealthy benefactors to smaller gifts—statues, cups and candelabra of precious metal.⁷⁸ The significance of phratries lies in their social context. Many members of these Greek associations, named after archaic cults and recording their deeds in Greek, are of the Roman and Neapolitan élites. Virtually all personal names are Romanized, and many of the identifiable names are those of Romans of senatorial rank. Phratry members, and phratry patrons, include the emperor Claudius, the consulars L. Munatius Hilarianus, L. Cresperius Proculus and L. Claudius Arrianus, and the equestrians T. Julius Dolabella and P. Sufenatius Myron.⁷⁹ Like the office of *demarkhos*, the phratries seem to be used as a means of exploiting the city’s Greek heritage to attract high-level patronage from the Roman elite, define the identity of the city and provide a language through which relations between Neapolitan and Roman élites could be conducted.

Hellenism in first- and second-century Magna Graecia is exploited for largely ceremonial purposes and as a means of honouring both members of the local elite and Roman notables. By this date, there is a clear separation between ethnic origins and culture—all the onomastic evidence points to a Greek culture adopted and manipulated by a Romanized elite and contained within a Romanized structure. Whether the elite classes of Magna Graecia represent a Romanized Greek aristocracy which had consciously adopted Roman nomenclature, or whether they are Roman or Italian incomers must remain an open question, but does not alter the force of the argument. Given the great gaps in the historical record, it is entirely possible that the Hellenism of the early empire does not represent cultural continuity from the pre-Roman period but was a conscious revival by the elite.

The question which naturally arises from this interpretation of the evidence is: why should Hellenism be particularly favoured by the élites of southern Italy? The answer lies in part in the privileged position of Hellenism within Roman culture as a whole and partly in developments which took place in Greek cultural and intellectual life in the second century AD. The profound impact of the extension of Roman power in the east on the cultural and intellectual life of the elite has already been

touched on. During the second and first centuries BC, the Roman elite became steadily more Hellenized. Both the increased wealth accruing from the conquest and commercial exploitation of the eastern Mediterranean and the influence of looted Greek treasures sparked a demand for Greek luxury goods. It became fashionable among wealthy Romans to have houses decorated with Greek paintings and artefacts. Hellenism also became an intellectual fashion. Greek poetry, plays and philosophy were in vogue, and by the middle of the first century BC, many Roman nobles were sending their sons to Athens to complete their education.⁸⁰ By the end of the first century, Greek was an obligatory second language for those with any pretensions to breeding or culture, to the extent that lack of Greek became synonymous with lack of aristocratic refinement. Marius' lack of a Greek education was something which was worthy of note in later authors, although possibly not unusual at the time.⁸¹

At the same time, there was a deeply ambivalent attitude towards Hellenism. The more conservative sections of the Roman elite denounced it as a source of moral decline, and charges of unRoman behaviour were levelled at Scipio Africanus, who was said to have adopted Greek dress and frequented the gymnasium while based in Sicily.⁸² This ambivalence resurfaces during the civil wars and the reign of Augustus. Antony was fiercely denounced for his supposed rejection of Rome in favour of the decadence of a Hellenistic court. In opposition to this, Octavian promoted himself as the upholder of the republican tradition and of traditional Roman virtues.⁸³ He did not, however, dissociate himself from all things Greek. Instead, he promoted a return to Greek classicism—as opposed to the orientalized Hellenistic tradition with which Antony was associated. This is reflected in the cults adopted by Augustus, who chose Apollo as his patron, in opposition to Dionysos, the patron god of the Antonians. It also emerges in the programme of public art initiated by Augustus, which adopted a style based on classicizing art and architecture.⁸⁴

These elements are encapsulated in the way in which the Bay of Naples became a fashionable resort patronized by wealthy Romans. The earliest prominent Roman to acquire a villa there was Scipio, noted for his philhellenism, who owned property at Liternum to which he retired in 184 BC.⁸⁵ It soon became almost universal for members of the Roman elite to own villas around the Bay, and a 'villa culture' evolved, centred on the elegant pursuit of *otium*, of which Hellenism was an integral part.⁸⁶ This patronage by the Roman elite became more focused after the civil wars. Augustus spent a large amount of time at Baiae, and the imperial villas there evolved into a large and luxurious complex.⁸⁷ Hellenism was undoubtedly one of the attractions of the area. Strabo and others comment extensively on the Greek flavour of life at Naples and Cumae, noting the continued existence of the phratries and of Greek festivals.⁸⁸ A new agonistic festival was founded at Naples in honour of Augustus in AD 2, closely modelled on the Olympic games, and the format was copied by Greek games founded at Rome and Puteoli.⁸⁹ Cumae was also a recipient of Augustan patronage, in the form of a restoration of the temple of Apollo paid for by Augustus.⁹⁰

In many respects, Hellenism was both cause and effect of Naples' popularity among the Roman elite. Initially, the Greek history of the Bay of Naples was one of

the factors which attracted the Roman elite. However, it was also part of Italy, which had loyally supported Rome for many centuries and which was part of the Roman citizen body. This dual tradition meant that Roman aristocrats could pursue an interest in Hellenism within this context, without incurring the odium of becoming 'unRoman'. However, with the addition of imperial patronage, particularly under philhellene emperors such as Nero, Domitian and Hadrian, Hellenism tended to generate its own momentum, in the sense that Naples, Cumae, Baiae and Puteoli became a magnet for Greeks from all parts of the empire, and particularly for teachers, poets, philosophers and artists seeking elite patronage and athletes drawn there for the Greek games.⁹¹

In the second century AD, Hellenism became politicized with the institution of the Panhellenion by Hadrian, which took place against the background of a more general movement in Greek intellectual life, the Second Sophistic.⁹² This was characterized by a revival of earlier features in many aspects of civic life in the Greek East. Buildings were constructed in an archaic style, lapsed Greek festivals, priesthoods and magistracies were restored, and ancient alliances between cities were renewed and celebrated. There was an upsurge of interest in local histories, and cities gave prominence to Greek foundation myths. On an individual level, personal names with an archaic or heroic flavour were in vogue. Examples include Jason of Argos, Theseus of Corinth and the traditional royal names resurgent at Sparta.⁹³ The motive behind this was the establishment of the Panhellenion, a league of Greek cities, membership of which conferred great prestige and status. Since possible members were closely vetted by Hadrian himself, membership also carried the assurance of imperial favour and patronage. It was, however, only open to those cities which could prove Greek origin and criteria for assessing Greekness were stringently applied.

Although there is no evidence that any of the western Greek cities were members of the Panhellenion,⁹⁴ many of the features of cultural life in the eastern provinces are mirrored in Italy, in the archaizing Hellenism of Naples, Velia, Rhegium and possibly other cities as well. By this date, the connections between power, patronage and Hellenism had become overt, but this is a theme which runs throughout the period under consideration. In Italy, Hellenism had become an integral part of the language of power by the reign of Augustus, and could be used to transmit many different messages. Orientalized Hellenistic decadence damned Antony, while classicizing traditionalism underwrote Augustus' regime and revivals or inventions of Greek traditions ensured high status under Hadrian. For the Greeks of Italy, with access to both Greek and Italian cultural traditions, Hellenism provided a means of constructing a civic identity which was eminently acceptable to the Roman elite.

CONCLUSIONS: HELLENISM AND CULTURAL TRANSITION IN ITALY

The subject of Hellenism and the processes of Hellenization is an inexhaustible one. However, it is apparent from even a brief summary of the available evidence that both the nature and significance of Hellenism underwent a profound change between

the fourth century BC and the second century AD. This perception is, of necessity, influenced by the disparity in the nature of the evidence. Greek influence in the fourth century occurs in the archaeological record—in changes in architecture, construction techniques, urban topography and manufactured goods, with only a small number of inscriptions to give an insight into the social changes which underlie these. In contrast, the material culture of the first and second centuries AD was of a fairly homogeneous nature throughout Italy, but the epigraphic and literary record gives a greater insight into the wider implications of cultural change.

Nevertheless, the overwhelming impression is of a shift from a situation where Greek culture was one element in a Graeco-Italic cultural *koine* to one in which it occupied a privileged status *vis-à-vis* other non-Roman cultures and was used both as a means of legitimizing Roman power and as a medium for elite interaction. In both cases, the vehicle for cultural diffusion was elite contact. This is not, in itself, surprising, if one accepts Gellner's model⁹⁵ of an elite culture which may have strong divisions between different sections of that elite, but is not differentiated by region. Gellner himself expresses reservations about the validity of the model for the Greek world, on the grounds that the depth of social stratification in the classical Greek *polis* was not large, but in this instance it seems to be appropriate.⁹⁶ In the fourth century, all indications are that diffusion of Hellenism is part of a process which includes increasing socio-economic stratification and an acceleration of urban development, of a type which must have been driven by central authority and the elite. Artefact distributions reinforce the impression of a cultural *koine* which included Greek, Illyrian and Italic elements, and also indicate that external influences on material culture were not restricted to the elite, but they were, nevertheless, the group which exploited Hellenism most visibly.

The actual mechanisms by which cultural influences were transmitted remain obscure, despite advances made by the use of theoretical modelling. There was constant skirmishing between Greeks and Italians, but there is no sense in which the Greeks were cultural imperialists, actively seeking to impose their culture on the surrounding territory.⁹⁷ There is also no positive correlation between peaceful contact and cultural transmission, since Hellenism peaked in the fourth century, which was a period of intense conflict and political instability in southern Italy. Attempts to link periods of Hellenization to the activities of Greek mercenary armies are equally unsatisfactory. Ruth Whitehouse and John Wilkins suggest⁹⁸ that the phenomenon was the result of trading contacts, and a parallel system of gift exchanges between élites which were driven by status-related considerations rather than purely economic motives. A peer-polity interaction model has also been suggested,⁹⁹ in which a group of cities of broadly equal status competing for dominance within a region simultaneously adopt similar features. Many of the indicators which we would expect in a situation of peer-polity interaction are present, but although this provides a possible explanation for some of the socio-political changes which took place, it does not account for the choice of Hellenism, in particular, as a mode of expression. Perhaps we should regard the adoption of Hellenism as an effect of this process rather than an integral part of it. It was chosen as a vehicle to express the ideology of the elite which evolved as a result of these social and political changes and the civic identities which they sought to promote.

By the first century AD, conditions had changed drastically. Paradoxically, as Greek power declined in the face of Roman expansion, both in the eastern and western Mediterranean, the cultural prestige and exclusivity of Hellenism grew rapidly, producing a polarization of political power and cultural dominance. Although there are relatively few instances of forcible acts of Romanization in Italy, the intrusive nature of Roman culture, particularly political culture, became more evident in the century after the Social War. The need to develop a reasonably uniform legal and administrative system was a corollary of the extension of citizenship, and a more general Romanization of social and economic structures followed from this, in southern Italy as elsewhere. At the same time, there was a marked internationalization of Greek culture in the Hellenistic period. The two strands met when the eastern Mediterranean fell under Roman control. Apart from the obvious political dimension to this, economic contacts with the Aegean increased dramatically, often involving elite families. This development of trade generated wealth and increased contact with Greek culture, which transformed cities, as the economic profits and cultural influences found their way into private and civic building programmes.¹⁰⁰ Among the Roman élite, Hellenism became an increasingly integral part of education and intellectual life, a trend which was to continue and intensify.

By the first century AD, a homogeneous Graeco-Roman culture had developed, shared by most of the élites of the empire. This provided a common idiom by which all élites could communicate, but for the Greek parts of the empire, including the Greek cities of Italy, it had a more important implication. Although Greek political power had waned, the prestige enjoyed by Hellenism gave those who could lay claim to a Greek background, whether cities or individuals, a means of interacting with the Roman elite, of attracting Roman patronage and of gaining personal or civic status. Thus, by a curious inversion of actual power and cultural influence, as the Italiotes lost independence and political power, and as many aspects of their civic life inevitably became Romanized, they gained in cultural power and prestige, and were able to exploit a culture which was no longer that of many of their citizens for the benefit of the elite. As in the fourth century, the processes of cultural exchange are closely bound up with those of increasing social stratification and the need to forge and express a new collective identity. There are also parallels in that both involve an increasing separation of elite and non-elite culture, in which non-indigenous cultural features formed part of a discourse between the élites of different cities, but excluded, to a greater or lesser extent, the non-elite of their own.

Cultural interaction, and the mechanisms of Hellenization and Romanization in Italy, is not, therefore, an exogenous process, involving transmission of influences from a dominant to a subordinate culture, but a process intimately connected with social and political changes within communities, and in particular with the development of social, political and economic hierarchies and the elite ideologies which accompanied this.

NOTES

- 1 Strab. 6.1.2 'with the exception of Naples, Rhegium and Tarentum, it [Magna Graecia] has become barbarized, some parts having been taken and held by the Lucanians and Bruttians and some by the Campanians, in other words, by the Romans, since they have themselves become Romans.' Here Strabo confronts this problem by creating a third category, the Romans, who are not included with the Greeks but are differentiated from the Italian 'barbarians'.
- 2 E.Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford, 1983), 8–18.
- 3 M.Nava, 'Greek and Adriatic influences in Daunia in the Early Iron Age', in J.-P. Descoeudres (ed.), *Greek Colonists and Native Populations* (Canberra and Oxford, 1990), 560–78.
- 4 The issue of Roman elite attitudes to Greek culture and their political significance is explored at length in E.Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (London, 1992). Gruen's conclusion that cultural factors were not exploited by the Romans for political purposes may well be true of the Republic, but must be less so of the empire, when bodies such as the Panhellenion were actively sponsored by emperors and had both a political and a cultural function.
- 5 R.D.Whitehouse and J.B.Wilkins, 'Greeks and natives in south-east Italy: approaches to the archaeological evidence', in T.C.Champion (ed.), *Centre and Periphery. Comparative Studies in Archaeology* (London, 1989), 102–26.
- 6 E.Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London, 1985), M.H. Crawford, 'Greek intellectuals and the Roman aristocracy', in P.D.Garnsey and C.R. Whittaker (eds), *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1978).
- 7 E.Ciaceri, *Storia della Magna Grecia* (Rome, 1926–30), III, 1–36.
- 8 Ciaceri, op. cit., II, 382–484.
- 9 G.Brauer, *Taras. Its History and its Coinage* (New York, 1986).
- 10 Brauer, op. cit.
- 11 P.G.Guzzo, 'Lucanians, Brettians and Italiote Greeks in the 4th and 3rd centuries BC', in T.Hackens, N.D. and R.R.Holloway (eds), *The Crossroads of the Mediterranean* (Louvain and Providence, 1983).
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- 13 Polyb. 3.91, M.Frederiksen, *Campania* (London, 1984), 13–15.
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- 15 D.Yntema, 'La ricerca topografica nel territorio Oritano', *Archivio Storico Pugliese* 39 (1986), 3–86, J.Boersma and D.Yntema, *Valesio: storia di un insediamento Apulo* (Fasano, 1987), J.Mertens, *Ordona*, Rome and Brussels, 1965–83, E.Lattanzi, 'Problemi topografici ed urbanistici dell'antica Egnazia', *Cenacolo* 4 (1974), Greco, op. cit., 217–20 (Rudiae, Cavallino), 223–5 (Manduria), 239–43 (Monte Sannace), 234–8 (Gnathia).
- 16 Whitehouse and Wilkins, op. cit., 102–26.
- 17 Yntema, op. cit., Lattanzi, op. cit., O.Pancrazzi, *Cavallino I. scavi ricerche 1964–7* (Galantina, 1979), Greco, op. cit., 55, 169–70, 219, 235–7, 241–3.
- 18 Lattanzi, op. cit., Pancrazzi, op. cit., Greco, op. cit., 217–19, 236–7.
- 19 P.Pensabene, 'Il tempio ellenistico di S Leucio di Canosa', in M.Torelli (ed.), *Italici in Magna Grecia. Lingua, insediamenti strutture* (Venosa, 1990).
- 20 O.Parlangèli, *Studi Messapici* (Milan, 1960), 51, 108, 121, 133, C.Santoro, *Nuovi studi Messapici Vol. I*. (Galantina, 1982), 40–2, 102.

- 21 E.Vetter, *Handbuch der italischen Dialekte* (Heidelberg, 1953), nos. 32, 162, 182, R.Peterson, *The Cults of Campania* (Rome, 1919), 358.
- 22 E.T.Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge, 1965), 114–18.
- 23 SEG 29.1026, M.T.Manni Piraino, 'Iscrizioni greche di Lucania', *PP* 23 (1968) 419–57, M.Cristofani, 'Società e istituzioni nell'Italia preromana', in *Popoli e civiltà dell'Italia Antica* 7 (1978), 97–8, Guzzo, op. cit., 201–2.
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- 25 Head, op. cit., 46–7, 49–51.
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- 29 G.Pugliese Carratelli, 'Sul culto delle Sirene nel golfo di Napoli', *PP* 7 (1952), 420–6.
- 30 G.Giannelli, *Culti Miti della Magna Grecia* (Florence, 1963), 107–10, 155, 158–9.
- 31 Giannelli, op. cit., 27–9.
- 32 *IG* 14.745.
- 33 *IG* 12.3.1233, J.Hatzfeld, 'Les Italiens résidants à Délos', *BCH* 36 (1912), 33, 65, 85–6.
- 34 Strab. 5.4.7.
- 35 Livy 8.25.9.
- 36 Aristox. *ap.* Ath. 14.632a–b, Diod. 12.76.4, Livy 4.44.1–2.
- 37 G.Pugliese Carratelli, 'Sanniti, Lucani, Brettii, Italoti dal secolo IV a.C.', *Atti di 11° Convegno sulla studi di Magna Grecia* (1972), 37–54, J.G.Pedley, *Paestum. Greeks and Romans in Southern Italy* (London, 1990), 97–112, Frederiksen, 137–47.
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- 39 Livy 25.11.1, 27.16.9.
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- 48 Cf. *CIL* 12.590 and 593.
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- 50 Plin. *N.H.* 3.46, Crawford, 193–208.
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- 64 *IG* 14.617–21, *SEG* 29.987–9.
- 65 E.g. *IG* 14.617 'Prytane/arkhon: Sex. Numonius Sex. F.Maturus; synprytaneis: K. Hortorius K.F.Balbillus, M.Pemponius M.F.Pulcher, M.Cornelius M.F.Martialis... Tamias; Melphthongos Matourou; Spondaules: Natalis; Kapnauges: Helikon Matourou'.
- 66 Spart. *Vit. Had.* 1.9.1.
- 67 *CIL* 10.1489, *IG* 14.745, 758, 760, *ILS* 6460, L.Correra, 'Miscellenea Epigraphica', *MDAI(R)* 19 (1904), 185.
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ROME IN THE GREEK WORLD

The significance of a name



Andrew Erskine

In the fifth century AD John Stobaeus compiled an anthology of excerpts from Greek poetry and prose. He included extracts of authors from Homer onwards and the sayings of famous people such as Darius and Socrates. These are all gathered together under different headings; for instance, there are sections on virtue, justice, anger, cowardice, generals and monarchy. The collection was produced, we are told, for the education of his son, hence perhaps the emphasis on ethics. In the section entitled *On Courage* (περὶ ἀνδρείας) the reader can learn of the wise man's ability to cope with torture, or the story of the Spartan mother who told her son to return from battle with his shield or on it, or the remark of Socrates that strength is movement of the soul along with the body.

But among these passages on courage and manliness is an item that seems out of place. It is a poem addressed to the goddess Roma, the divine personification of the city of Rome. What is a poem about such a goddess doing amid all this material on courage? The key to this question, it has long been recognized, lies in the ambiguity of the Greek word ῥώμη, which we would transliterate as *rhōmē*. This is the Greek word for the city of Rome (*Roma* in Latin), but by a remarkable coincidence it is the same as the Greek word for 'strength'. It is generally agreed that when Stobaeus entitled the poem *To Rhōmē* (εἰς ῥώμην) he mistakenly thought that it was a poem to strength, whereas in fact it is a poem, maybe we should say a 'hymn', to the goddess Roma. Maurice Bowra is quite blunt about it: Stobaeus 'blunders'. But is it quite such a blunder? The Greeks, as will be seen later in this chapter, were familiar with the double meaning of Rome's name, Rome and strength, and a reading of the poem suggests that the writer is exploiting this ambiguity. The dating of the poem has generated much debate. Proposed dates vary from the second century BC to the second century AD, though its contents seem more appropriate to the period of the Roman Republic.¹

The poem is in Sapphic stanzas and is attributed to an otherwise unknown poetess from Lesbos called Melinno:

χαῖρέ μοι Ῥώμα, θυγάτηρ Ἄρεος,
 χρυσεομίτρα δαΐφρων ἄνασσα,
 σεμνὸν ἅ νάεις ἐπὶ γᾶς Ὀλυμπον
 αἰὲν ἄθροαστον.

σοὶ μόνῃ, πρέσβιστα, δέδωκε Μοῖρα
κῦδος ἀρρήκτῳ βασιλῆον ἀρχᾶς,
ὄφρα κοιρανῆον ἔχοισα κάρτος
ἀγεμονεύης.

σᾷ δ' ὑπὸ σδεύγλᾳ κρατερῶν λεπάδνων
στέρνα γαίης καὶ πολίης θαλάσσης
σφίγγεται· σὺ δ' ἀσφαλέως κυβερνᾷς
ἄστεα λαῶν.

πάντα δὲ σφάλλον ὁ μέγιστος αἰὼν
καὶ μεταπλάσσω βίον ἄλλοτ' ἄλλως
σοὶ μόνῃ πλησίστιον οὗρον ἀρχᾶς
οὐ μεταβάλλει.

ἧ γὰρ ἐκ πάντων σὺ μόνῃ κρατίστους
ἄνδρας αἰχματὰς μεγάλους λοχεύεις
εὖσταχυν Δάματρος ὅπως ἀνείσα
καρπὸν ἀπ' ἀγρῶν.

Hail, Roma, daughter of Ares, warlike mistress with a girdle of gold, who has as a dwelling place on earth holy Olympus forever unshaken.

To you alone, most esteemed one, Fate has given the royal glory of everlasting rule so that you may govern with lordly might.

By your yoke with its strong straps the breasts of the earth and the grey sea are bound fast. With a sure hand you steer the cities of men.

Almighty time overturns everything and moulds life this way and that. It is only in your case that it does not change the favourable wind which maintains your rule.

Certainly, out of all people you alone bring forth the strongest men, great warriors as they are, just as if producing the crop of Demeter from the land.

The strength and might of Roma are the main subjects of the poem. Like those other strong women of the ancient world, the Amazons, Roma is a daughter of Ares, like them she wears a golden girdle. The image of Roma in her chariot with the earth and sea yoked together and under her control again emphasizes the goddess' strength, the strength of an all-powerful charioteer. So great is the strength and resilience of Roma that even omnipotent time does not put an end to her empire. Words conveying strength and power occur frequently in the poem, warlike (*δαίφρων*), rule (*ἀρχή*), might (*κάρτος*), strong (*κρατερός*) and strongest (*κρατίστος*). There is no doubt that Melinno's Roma possessed immense strength, whether physical or metaphorical—and *rhome* could mean both. If Melinno's poem is interpreted as exploiting the ambiguity of *rhome*, then Stobaeus' 'blunder' becomes more understandable.

ROMAN RULE IN THE GREEK EAST

By the time that Stobaeus was collecting his educational material in the fifth century AD no doubt the pun had lost much of its original force. But in the second and first centuries BC and even in the early Empire it must have seemed quite different. Here was this new power, a city actually called Strength, taking over more and more of the Greek world. It would have given Rome a special aura in the eyes of the Greeks.

Rome, a Latin-speaking city of central Italy, was quite distinct from the Greeks who occupied south Italy, Sicily and much of the eastern Mediterranean. Since the fourth century BC the Romans had been gaining control of more and more of the Italian peninsula, but it was not until the third century that they came into any significant contact with Greeks. Pyrrhus, the king of Epirus, came to the assistance of Tarentum and other Greek cities of south Italy, but unable to defeat the Romans, he returned to the Greek mainland in 275 and southern Italy soon succumbed to Roman rule. Nevertheless, Rome's main preoccupation in the third century was not Greeks but the North African city of Carthage with which it fought two major and very lengthy wars. Victory in these established Roman supremacy in the western Mediterranean. There had been some brief expeditions across the Adriatic into the Greek world in the later years of the third century, but it was only with the defeat of Carthage in 202 that Rome was able to commit substantial resources to war in the East.

At the beginning of the second century the cities of the Greek East were controlled by four main kingdoms, the Antigonids in Macedon, the Seleucids in Syria, the Ptolemies in Egypt and the rather newer dynasty of the Attalids in Asia Minor. Posing as the liberators of the Greek cities on the mainland and later those in Asia Minor, the Romans defeated first Carthage's erstwhile ally, Philip V of Macedon, and then the Seleucid king, Antiochus the Great. By the end of the second century Macedon and Asia had become Roman provinces while the Ptolemies and the Seleucids recognized Roman authority. Neither kingdom was to survive until the end of the next century. By the late first century AD the Greek world was part of an empire which stretched from Spain to modern Turkey and the Middle East, and from Britain to North Africa.

So an extraordinary situation emerges. The great kings of the Hellenistic world were subject to or eliminated by a city whose very name meant 'strength'. Yet scholars seem to have surprisingly little to say about this peculiarly appropriate double meaning.² What did the Greeks make of it? And how did it effect their perception of Rome and the Romans?

NAMES AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

The Greeks did consider names to be important and meaningful in some way. In the fourth century BC Plato raises the subject in the *Cratylus*, posing the question: is the distribution of names to gods, people and things purely arbitrary or are names in some way appropriate to their object? One of the characters in the dialogue is called Hermogenes, a name which means 'offspring of Hermes', a god who is patron of

merchants and bankers. Cratylus jokes that 'Hermogenes' cannot be Hermogenes' true name, because he is so unsuccessful at making money (*Crat.* 383b–84c). Many Greek personal names did have obvious meanings, for instance Philoxenos, 'friend of strangers', or Nikomakhos, 'victor in battle'. Comic poets such as Aristophanes would create names for their characters which were modelled on real names but which had a meaning relevant to the play. In Aristophanes' *Wasps* there is Philokleon, 'lover of Kleon' the Athenian politician; then, moving a stage further from real names, there is also Bdelykleon, 'hater of Kleon'. Rhetoricians too were conscious of the meanings of names. Aelius Theon, an Alexandrian of the second century AD, wrote a handbook for teachers of rhetoric. In the section on encomia he suggested that a speaker could make use of the meaning of a person's name if it was suitable and he gave the example of Demosthenes, whose name meant 'strength of the people'.³ Obvious meanings of this sort are not so common in the case of cities or places,⁴ but where they did exist they could be exploited. Rhodes, for example, placed a rose (*rhodon*) on its coins. So Rome was somewhat unusual as a city in having a meaningful name and this alone would have attracted interest, but, more importantly, in contrast to the playful pun of Rhodes this name was uncannily prophetic.

So the meaning of a name was noticed and could be seen as giving an insight into the character of the bearer. Confirmation of this comes from the way in which names are given as a form of wish-fulfilment. By giving a suitable name the giver hopes that the bearer of that name will turn out to be the right type of person or thing. Names can represent parents' aspirations, so a son might be called Phylarkhos, 'tribe leader', or perhaps Alexander in the hope that he will in some way emulate the Macedonian king. Slave women might be called Eutamia, 'easily managed', or Titthe, 'nursemaid'. Similarly unlucky names or names with bad associations would be avoided. Underlying this is a belief, not necessarily conscious, that a name is related to the character or fate of its bearer.⁵ Such a belief also enables names to take on a prophetic aspect. It was, for instance, felt to be a bad omen for the success of the Athenian expedition to Sicily that Nikias whose name was derived from 'victory' had refused the command.⁶

Naming as an act of wish-fulfilment is not limited to personal names; two further and very relevant examples are provided by dogs and ships. Xenophon in his *Art of Hunting* (7.5), written in the fourth century BC, discusses appropriate names to give to hunting dogs. They must be short, he says. He then proceeds to list almost fifty suitable names, and a reading of these names give us some idea of what Xenophon wanted to get out of his dog. Some such as *Joy* reflect favourable emotional states, others such as *Guard* the dog's role as a protector, but the majority suggest aggression in some way. Xenophon proposes *Savage*, *Destroyer*, *Killer*, *Anger* and also a string of words meaning 'force' or 'strength', including *Alke*, *Sthenon*, *Bia* and interestingly *Rhome*. It is possible that these names were never used, but even so the choice of *Rhome* as the name for a hunting dog reveals something about the way it would have been perceived as a name. Similarly the names of warships reflect the hopes and values of the city or crew. Thus in the Athenian dockyards of the fourth century BC there were triremes named *Democracy*, *Victory*, *City-saver* and *Rhome*.⁷ Here *Rhome* is attached to an instrument of war and indicates a desire for a strong ship, strong both to damage the enemy in battle and to protect the crew.

So, even before the Roman conquest of the East the Greeks did believe *Rhōmē* to be a meaningful name. There is, however, no clear evidence of the date at which the Greeks first made use of the ambiguity in the name of Rome the city. The earliest surviving text which is datable is a geographical poem, written not later than the 70s BC. It has little value as either geography or poetry, but the author does say that Rome ‘has a name equal to its power’.⁸ The verses of Melinno may be earlier than this, as might the *Alexandra* attributed to Lycophron which uses the pun, but the dates of both these are highly controversial.⁹ A passage in Plutarch discussed in the next section suggests that the Greeks were conscious of the ambiguity as early as the third century BC. No doubt it was the Greeks of southern Italy who first thought about it. The ambiguity of Rome’s name may have produced different responses at different times, but, because the evidence is scattered and difficult to date, this chapter will chiefly be concerned to give a general impression.

STRENGTH: EXPLANATION AND OMEN

The Greeks as a colonizing people had a particular interest in the origins of a city. Stories grew up about the circumstances in which cities were founded, and Rome as the most powerful city in the Mediterranean generated more stories than most. Stories about the foundation of Rome sometimes contain a reference or allusion to the ambiguity of Rome’s name. The relationship between Rome’s strength and its name appears in two main forms. On one view Rome was named after the strength of its original inhabitants, on the other the name was an omen of future strength.

Plutarch’s *Life of Romulus*, written when Roman control of the Mediterranean was long established, provides examples of both approaches. The *Life* begins:¹⁰

The great name of Rome is well known to one and all, but as to its origins there is no agreement among historians. Some say that the Pelasgians, after they had wandered over most of the earth and overpowered most men, settled there, and on account of their strength (*rhōmē*) in arms they named the city in this way.

Here there is a direct link between military prowess and the name of the city of Rome. But the military strength in question is not that of contemporary Romans but of the founders of the city. The Pelasgians are not, however, the usual founders: Aeneas, Romulus and Remus are nowhere to be seen, which suggests that this story emerged before Aeneas and Romulus became leading figures in the most prevalent stories. Consequently it is most likely that this version of Rome’s foundation dates from the third century BC or earlier, a period in which several competing founders of Rome were current in Greek circles.¹¹ The story explains Rome’s name not in terms of present strength but in terms of the city’s origins. There may be a straightforward reason for this. By the third century BC Rome still had to establish its power in the Greek world; it was not yet the spectacularly successful state it was to become. Once Rome had proved that it could defeat Hellenistic kings in battle, perceptions changed. Rome’s name was then seen as prophetic. There was no longer a need to look to the past for an explanation, because the explanation was there in the present, in Rome’s

manifest power in the Greek world. Now stories of Rome's origins contained allusions to the ambiguity of its name, hinting at the great strength that was to come.

Plutarch collected many different stories about the origins of Rome and its name in his *Life of Romulus*, including one with prophetic overtones (*Rom.* 2). This links Rome, strength and this time Romulus too. It concerns a king of Alba, Tarchetius, who one day saw a surprising sight in his hearth. For rising up from his hearth was a phallus. Understandably disconcerted, he consulted an oracle which said that an unmarried girl should have sexual intercourse with the phallus and that the resulting child would be very famous and excel in virtue, fortune and strength (*rhome*). Here at the core of the story Rome's ambiguous name appears again. Tarchetius was keen to have such a grandchild and instructed one of his daughters accordingly. Not so enthusiastic herself, she passed on the instructions to a servant girl. Tarchetius found out and imprisoned both his daughter and the servant girl. When the servant eventually gave birth to twins, the king ordered someone to get rid of them. At this point a more familiar story begins. The twins were found by a wolf, brought up by a herdsman and in time grew up and killed king Tarchetius. So here a mysterious phallus, a symbol of strength, produces a boy excelling in strength, in fact two boys, who go on to found the city of Rome. But maybe the famous offspring excelling in virtue, fortune and strength is not Romulus but Rome itself.

So from the very foundation of the city Rome's name signalled its future greatness. It should not be surprising that this approach finds its way into the world of oracles and prophecy. With all their reliance on enigma and obscurity this is just the right place for Rome's ambiguous nature to be exploited. The main surviving oracular writings are the Sibylline Oracles; these frequently deal with the rulers of the East, past, present and future. The extent to which they reflect pagan, Jewish or even Christian tradition is a matter of dispute, but they do adopt a Greek form. For the purposes of this chapter it is only important that they represent an eastern response to Rome in Greek. The eleventh Sibylline Oracle contains the following passage about the origins of Rome:¹²

But when Italy brings forth a great marvel for men, a whimpering of infants by an unpolluted spring in a shady cave, children of a sheep-eating wild beast, who, when they have reached adulthood, on seven strong hills will cast down many men of shameless spirit. Both number one hundred.¹³ To them a name will show a great sign of things to come. And on seven hills they will build strong walls and around them they will raise up weighty Ares.

Surely the name alluded to here must be *Rhome*—strength and Rome; its very name prophesied its future greatness. And note how they are seven *strong* hills on which there are *strong* walls. Later in the same oracle we are told that someone from Troy, presumably Aeneas, will set up a 'strong city'.¹⁴

Similarly a highly obscure and controversial pseudo-prophecy, put into the mouth of the Trojan Cassandra and attributed to Lycophron, contains the following lines:¹⁵

My descendants will in time to come increase immeasurably the fame of the race of my ancestors, carrying off the foremost crown with their spears and obtaining kingly power over earth and sea (cf. Melinno)...A certain kinsman of mine will leave a pair of lion cubs, offspring excelling in strength (*rhome*)...

The use of Rome's highly charged name had so entered the oracular tradition that even mock prophecies were adopting it.¹⁶

The strength alluded to in these passages is the strength which is necessary to conquer and rule the world, the military strength so praised by Melinno. But it is not portrayed unfavourably. However strong Rome may be it is not, here at least, menacingly aggressive. That would be the view of an enemy, who, although no doubt perceiving Rome's name as ominous, would have been reluctant to voice such fears. Even if they were expressed, little anti-Roman material in fact survives.¹⁷

Both the approaches discussed above look to Rome's origins, but there is an important distinction. The first approach, probably the earliest, explains Rome's name through the strength of the founders, whereas the second is more than an explanation of Rome's name. It also provides the Greeks with an explanation of their present predicament. Rome's name, by presaging the city's future greatness, gave Roman power a form of divine sanction. It helped Greeks come to terms with their subject position. Resistance against a state destined since its foundation to rule the world was surely futile.

STRENGTH: PROTECTOR AND BENEFactor

Greeks, as they observed Rome in action, could see strength as the characteristic by which Rome acquired its world-wide empire. Such strength was something that could inspire fear and awe. Yet at the same time other interpretations would have been possible. Strength would have been desirable in Xenophon's hunting dog not just because a strong dog is more successful in pursuit and more likely to be a winner than a weak one, but also because a strong dog is something a master can put his trust in; it provides protection. Similarly naming a warship '*Rhōmē*' encompasses its capacity both to threaten the enemy and to protect the crew and no doubt the city as well. It reflects the seafarers' trust in and dependence on the ship, whether in the face of the dangers of battle or of the sea itself. So strength can also be reassuring and protective. 'Killer' or 'Savage', on the other hand, allow a more limited range of interpretations.

The surviving evidence may not exploit the pun explicitly in this sense, but it does at times come close.¹⁸ In the second century AD the rhetorician Aelius Aristides visited Rome and delivered an encomium of Rome. In this he has the image of Rome carrying cities one on top of the other:¹⁹

Just as a man who surpasses everybody else in size and strength (*rhōmē*) is not satisfied unless he lifts up and carries others on his shoulders, so this city which occupies so much land is not satisfied with its extent, but lifts up above it other cities of equal size and carries them one on top of the other. Thus, the name of the city is significant and what you see around you is nothing but *rhōmē*/strength. So that if anyone wanted to completely unpack it and then lay out on the ground the cities which are now up in the air and place them alongside each other, I think that they would fill as much of Italy as is now left empty and there would be one continuous city stretching to the Ionian Sea.

Aelius clearly has in mind the great height of Rome with its multi-storey *insulae*,²⁰ but the comparison between Rome and a strong man carrying those who are not so strong or large has other overtones. There is nothing militaristic here. Such a man could be using his strength to protect or help the rest. This is in fact a view of Rome that Aelius does present in the rest of the encomium.

Rome the benefactor may seem at odds with Rome the destroyer and conqueror. In the second century BC Rome had enslaved 150,000 Epirotes, dismantled the Akhaian League, installed oligarchies and razed Corinth to the ground.²¹ Even in the first century AD the quelling of the Jewish revolt led to the destruction of Jerusalem. Yet the image of Rome as protector and benefactor was widespread in the Greek world. It was in fact the image projected by the Romans themselves, appearing as the liberators of the Greeks against the power of the kings. The Greeks in turn looked to the Romans as providers of benefits and sent numerous embassies to Rome and to Roman commanders. This perception of Rome found public expression in the honours given to Rome and Romans. Individual Roman magistrates were honoured as benefactors; there are inscriptions from throughout Greece that record honours given to Titus Flamininus after his proclamation of Greek freedom in 196 BC (Fig. 16.1).²² The Romans collectively are perceived as benefactors; many documents from Greek cities refer to the Romans as ‘the Romans the Common Benefactors’ in a manner that appears quite superfluous.²³ This phrase suggests that the Romans are the benefactors of all the Greeks and marks a significant difference from the kings who, although ruling extensive territories, were normally honoured as benefactors of particular communities. The goddess Roma too was sometimes called Roma Euergetis, which meant Roma the benefactress.²⁴ All this should not surprise us. Those cities, governments and rulers that won Roman support became dependent on Rome and expressed their gratitude publicly. Furthermore, recognition of Rome as benefactor is also recognition of Rome’s power. The two merge.

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Figure 16.1 Coin portrait of Flamininus. Reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.



Figure 16.2 Didrachm from Locri, showing Pistis crowning a seated figure of Roma. Reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

STRENGTH: RELIGION

Rome's power in the East was such that it generated a religious response from the Greek cities there. Cults were established which treated Rome or aspects of Rome as in some way divine and it is here that I believe the ambiguity of Rome's name was most potent. These cults, which can conveniently be called cults of Roman power, were a means by which the Greeks could represent the exceptional power of Rome to themselves.²⁵ It was like no other city they knew. The worship of a ruler was not a new and unfamiliar phenomenon. The Hellenistic kings, who had preceded the Romans as the rulers of the East, had received cult honours from their subject Greek cities.²⁶ Rome, however, was not a king but a city, and it was more powerful than any of the kings had been.

A wide variety of cults of Roman power developed, differing from place to place. The most common was the cult of the goddess Roma (Fig. 16.2). Sometimes this was combined with another aspect of Roman power, such as the cult of the People (*demos*). There is a detailed decree from Miletos in Asia Minor which lists all the sacrifices that are to be made to the People of the Romans and to Roma throughout the year.²⁷ At Thessaloniki there was a priest of Roma and the Roman benefactors (*euergetai*).²⁸ On at least one occasion the Dionysiac artists of the Isthmus offered sacrifices to the Romans the Common Benefactors.²⁹ T. Flamininus and C. Julius Caesar were both the object of cult.³⁰ Later, of course, it was the emperors who became the focus of Greek cult honours, in what is now known as the imperial cult. Often the emperors were honoured in conjunction with the goddess Roma, as happened at Pergamum, where there was a temple to Roma and Augustus.³¹

So there was no one form that cults of Roman power had to take. But it was the worship of the goddess Roma that predominated over all the rest, at least in the Republican period. The other cults all had their failings. Collective cults such as the 'Roman Benefactors' were vague and insubstantial, cults of the *demos* of the Romans

would tend to appeal to those cities that placed particular importance on the *demos*, and individuals, especially with the Roman system of annual magistracies, tended to be transient. Roma, on the other hand, was simple and concise, but it also had another advantage—its name. The goddess Roma, the city of Rome and strength were all represented by the same word in Greek, *Rhōmē* (Ῥώμη). So Roma personified the city, and its name conveyed something. The two aspects of Roma as strength were important to its existence as a deity, first strength as the means by which it acquired its empire and second strength as something protective. Gods may inspire fear, but they should also be able to assist and protect weak mortals.

Our evidence for the cult of Roma in the East is in some ways plentiful, but in other ways hopelessly inadequate. There are few literary references and, although there are quite a large number of inscriptions, most of these reveal no more than the existence of a priest or festival. What is lacking is good evidence for the substance and the content of cults of Roman power in action. What remains is the shell. The language of the cults is largely missing and it is in this language that we would expect to come across any references to the ambiguity of Rome's name. But some glimpses at the content of the cults are possible.

A start can be made by returning to Melinno's hymn, which is clearly addressed to the goddess Roma. It exploits the ambiguity of Rome's name, emphasizing Rome's military strength. Right at the beginning Roma is called 'daughter of Ares, warlike mistress'. Nothing is known about why this hymn was written, nor indeed about Melinno herself. But there are signs that it was intended for use within the context of the celebration of the cult of Roma. Not only is it addressed directly to Roma but its structure is unusual for Greek Sapphics or indeed for much Greek lyric poetry. Rather than following the normal practice of allowing sentences to run from one stanza to the next, Melinno clearly marks out the breaks between stanzas by concluding each stanza with the end of a sentence. This sharp division may have been for ritual reasons, allowing the hymn to be sung or recited at five different stations by five different people or groups of people.³² So Melinno's hymn with its praise of Rome's strength may have played a part within cult celebrations.

Melinno is not the only one to eulogize Rome in this way. At Delphi in the mid-second century BC a decree was passed honouring a certain Aristotheos of Troizen, described as an historian, for writing encomia of the Romans the Common Benefactors.³³ This may have been in the context of a cult, either of the Romans the Common Benefactors or of the goddess Roma, but any such encomia are now lost and little can be known of their content. Aelius Aristides' encomium of Rome, cited in the last section, does survive, but it was not written for use in a cult. Nevertheless, it may have adopted themes that were used in cult encomia. Noticeable is the way in which the ambiguity of Rome and strength is introduced at the very beginning as if to establish this point and put it in the minds of the audience as they listen to the rest of the encomium. Rome is compared to previous empires, none of which are as large or as beneficent as Rome. Aristides was not unusual in exploiting the meaning of a name in this way; we have already seen how the rhetorician Theon recommended this practice in the section of his rhetorical handbook which dealt with encomia.

The celebration of Roma in these cults may also have focused on Rome's origins, as was the case at Chios. A battered inscription from Chios reveals that the cult of Roma there in some way involved Romulus and Remus. The state of the text leaves it unclear how they were involved. There may have been some form of recitation on the origins of Rome.³⁴ If so, this would be just the place for an allusion to the prophetic overtones of Rome's name which were observed earlier. Other cities may have paid similar attention to Rome's origins, but we have no evidence. It is only chance that allows this fragmentary glimpse at the cult in Chios.

It was, I suspect, the very ambiguity of Rome's name which gave the cult of Roma its special attraction. Its military strength was evident in the verses of Melinno, its peaceful, protective strength in representations, such as Roma Euergetis, Roma the Benefactress. Cults were a way of representing the ruling power to the subject. The *Demos* of the Romans and the Roman benefactors were satisfactory but uninspiring ways of representing Rome to the Greeks. The goddess Roma was something different. Here the ruling city was represented not just by a personification but by its essential characteristic. Divine honours were being paid not simply to the ruling state but also to its chief attribute, strength. Rome's name emphasized the distance between subject and ruler and became part of the justification for Roman rule.

ROME, STRENGTH AND LATIN LITERATURE

By the late first century BC the pun is used by the Romans themselves. Writers of the Augustan age, such as the poets Tibullus, Horace, Vergil and Ovid all feature it in their work.³⁵ Tibullus directly links Rome's world rule with its prophetic name in the line:

Rome, your name is fated to rule the earth.
Roma, tuum nomen terris fatale regendis.³⁶

In Ovid's *Amores* Rome's strength is responsible for her present prosperity:

If Rome had not extended her strength over the world,
She would even now be filled with thatched huts.
Roma, nisi immensum vires promosset in orbem,
Stramineis esset nunc quoque tecta casis.³⁷

Horace, however, thinking of the trauma of the late Republic, sees Rome's strength as self-destructive:

Now another generation is being ground down by civil wars
And Rome herself collapses from her own strength.
Altera iam teritur bellis civilibus aetas
Suis et ipsa Roma viribus ruit.³⁸

Here Roma is side by side with *viribus* and this is surely no coincidence. Nor was it only poets. Horace's sentiments, together with the exploitation of the double meaning of Rome's Greek name, find similar expression in the Preface to Livy's History.³⁹

If the Latin and Greek uses of this pun are examined it will be seen that there is an interesting contrast. The pun is used in each case in a different way. In the Latin authors, such as the poets discussed above, its use is essentially trivial. It displays the cleverness of the writer, his knowledge of Greek language and literary culture. Indeed it would be obscure to the audience unless they know Greek. The allusion, for instance, of Horace's *Roma viribus* is only intelligible to someone familiar with both Greek and Latin. On the other hand, for the Greeks not only is the connection more direct—being the same word—but it is also more serious. It is not simply a clever line in poetry, but part of political realities. It forms an element of the Greek reaction to Rome, whether that reaction is for or against Rome, conscious or unconscious. Rome does dominate the Greeks and it is manifestly strong. The ambiguity of *Rhōmē* not only serves as an explanation of the name of the city, it also helps to explain the present situation, Roman rule in the Greek East. It makes it easier for the Greeks to represent Rome to themselves. There is a great gulf between the Greeks' worship of Roma the goddess, the personification of the city and its strength, and a clever, sophisticated line in Horace's poetry.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has tried to sketch out the implications of Rome's ambiguous name in the Greek world. The Greeks interpreted Rome's 'strength' in the light of their current perceptions of Rome, yet at the same time the ambiguity would have helped to shape and confirm those perceptions. The strength that Rome represented in the eyes of the Greeks would have changed over time, but, because the evidence for the awareness and use of this double meaning is more limited than we would like, it is not easy to determine the exact nature of this change. Some conjectures, however, can be made. It is likely that the ambiguity was observed and used even before Rome became important in the East. At that stage the name had no special significance and was simply explained by the military strength of Rome's founders. The foundation, after all, is the point at which a city normally acquires its name.

Once Rome became a military power in the East and soon the dominant one, perceptions changed. Rome's name, previously unusual but relatively innocuous, had now become eerily appropriate. Surely its name was an omen of that strength which was now defeating and subjecting the kings who ruled the East. Yet, for Rome's friends and allies this strength was also reassuring and protective. As rivals were eliminated and the eastern empire grew more stable, a more pacific interpretation of Rome's strength may have overshadowed the military. But, whether it was Rome the military power or Rome the protector, both were central elements of Rome's image in the Greek world. In Rome's portentous name the Greeks found both an explanation and a justification for their present subordinate position. It should occasion no surprise that the goddess Roma became the most prevalent cult of Roman power: for the Greeks Rome and strength were inextricable.

NOTES

- 1 Stobaeus 3.7.2, III, p. 312 Hense. The most important discussion of the poem is M.Bowra, 'Melinno's hymn to Rome', *JRS* 47 (1957), 21–8, who with R.Mellor, *Thea Roma: The Worship of the Goddess Roma in the Greek World* (Göttingen, 1975), 121, favours an early date; H.Lloyd-Jones and P.Parsons (eds) *Supplementum Hellenisticum* (Berlin and New York, 1983), no. 541, prefer a late date. Extensive bibliography can be found in J.-L. Ferrary, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme: aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique* (Rome, 1988). The text printed here adopts Bergk's emendation ἀπ' ἀγρῶν instead of the unsatisfactory ἀπ' ἀνδρῶν, see Bowra, op. cit., 21.
- 2 Th. Birt, 'De Romae urbis nomine deque robore Romano', *Academia Marburgensis*, Winter 1887/8, 1–17, is mainly on Latin literature, more recently I.Opelt, 'Roma=Ῥώμη und Rom als Idee', *Philologus* 109 (1965), 47–56.
- 3 Aelius Theon *Progyrn.* 8 in *Rhet Gr.* II, ed. Spengel, p. 111.
- 4 G.R.Stewart, *Names on the Globe* (New York and Oxford, 1975), 190–204. When there was no obvious meaning, people still searched for an explanation of names, cf. the work attributed to Plutarch, *On the Names of Rivers*, *GGM* II (ed. Müller), pp. 637–65.
- 5 For a fuller account of much of the material discussed in the beginning of this paragraph, M.Golden, 'Names and naming at Athens: three studies', *Échos du monde classique* 30 (1986), 245–69, who also argues that the names of citizen women are more complex.
- 6 According to Timaeus, who also saw a link between the mutilation of the Hermai and the name of the victorious Syracusan commander Hermokrates, *Plut. Nic.* 1.2. Such interpretations are still found in late antique saints' lives, cf. the wise and holy Eutykhios from a village, the name of which meant 'divine' (Θείου κώμη) and whose mother Synesia was 'truly the mother of wisdom (*synesis*)', Eustratios, *Life of Eutykhios*, chs 1 and 5=PG 86.ii. 2277d, 2280c. I am grateful to Anna Wilson for drawing my attention to the Eustratios passage.
- 7 *IG* II² 1604, lines 10, 24, 70, 83; 1611, lines 72, 81.
- 8 Ps.-Scymnus, in *GGM* I (ed. Müller), p. 205, lines 231–2.**
- 9 On Melinno, see above; on Lycophron, the widely differing views of A.Momigliano, 'Terra marique', *JRS* 32 (1942), 53–64, 'The Locrian maidens and the date of Lycophron's *Alexandra*', *CQ* 89 (1945), 49–55 and S.West, 'Lycophron italicised', *JHS* 104 (1984), 127–51.
- 10 τὸ μέγα τῆς Ῥώμης ὄνομα καὶ δόξη διὰ πάντων ἀνθρώπων κεχωρηκὸς ἄφ' ὅτου καὶ δι' ἣν αἰτίαν τῇ πόλει γέγονεν, οὐχ ὠμολόγηται παρὰ τοῖς συγγραφεῦσιν, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν Πελαγοῦς, ἐπὶ πλείστα τῆς οἰκουμένης πλανηθέντας ἀνθρώπων τε πλείστων κρατήσαντας, αὐτόθι κατοικῆσαι, καὶ διὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις ῥώμην οὕτως ὀνομάσαι τὴν πόλιν.
- 11 On the story and the date, D.Briquel, *Les Pélasges en Italie: recherches sur l'histoire de la légende* (Paris, 1984), 507–14. Another story from a similar date holds that Rome was originally called Valentia until Evander (and in Festus' version Aeneas) arrived and translated the name as *Rhome* (Servius on Vergil, *Aen.* 1.273), and attributed to an historian from Cumae by Festus, p. 328 (ed. Lindsay), on which Opelt, op. cit., esp. 49–54. For these and others which seek to explain Rome's name by reference to strength, R.Maltby, *A Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies* (Leeds, 1991), s.v. Roma; 'Romulus' could also be explained in the same way, Maltby, s.v. Romulus.

- 12 ἄλλ' ὅταν Ἰταλίη προφύη μέγα θαῦμα βροτοῖσιν, νηπιάρχων μινύρισμα ἀκηρασίη παρὰ πηγῇ ἄνθρω ἐπὶ σκιερῷ θηρὸς τέκνα μηλοφάγοιο, οἵτινες ἀνδρωθέντες ἐφ' ἑπτὰ λόφοισι κραταιοῖς πολλοὺς πρηνίζουσιν ἀναιδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντας, ἀμφότεροι ἀριθμῶν ἑκατόν, οἷς οὖνομα δεῖξει σῆμα μέγ' ἐσσομένων· καὶ ἑπτὰ λόφοισι δὲ τεῖχη καρτερὰ δωμήσουσι καὶ ἄμφ' αὐτοῖς βαρὺν Ἄρη στήσουσιν (lines 109–17). A translation of the Sibylline Oracles by J. J. Collins is available in J. H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1: *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (London, 1983), 317–472.
- 13 Rho, the first letter of both Romulus and Remus, =100.
- 14 πόλιν κρατερήν, line 155, cf. also *Orac. Sib.* 12.34, 14.208, also 3.363–4, on which C.W. Macleod, 'Horace and the Sibyl (*Epode* 16.2)', *CQ* 29 (1979), 220–1=*Collected Essays* (Oxford, 1983), 218–19.
- 15 γένους δὲ πάππων τῶν ἐμῶν αὐθις κλέος μέγιστον αὐξήσουσιν ἄμναμοι ποτε αἰχμαῖς τὸ πρωτόλειον ἄραντες στέφος, γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης σκηπτρα καὶ μοναρχίαν λαβόντες. οὐδ' ἄμνηστον, ἀθλία πατρίς, κύδος μαρανθὲν ἐγκατακρύψει ζόφω. τοιοῦσδ' ἐμός τις σύγγονος λείψει διπλοῦς σκύμνους λέοντας, ἔσοχον ῥώμη γένος . . . (lines 1226–33). On Lycophron, above n. 9.
- 16 It is also found in the context of a dream, Plut. *Parallela Graeca et Romana* 310B.
- 17 On the little that there is, H.Fuchs, *Der geistige Widerstand gegen Rom in der antiken Welt* (Berlin, 1938); on philosophical views, A.Erskine, *The Hellenistic Stoa: Political Thought and Action* (London, 1990), pp. 181–204; E.Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), 316–56 deals with the Greek view of Rome in the second century BC.
- 18 Cf., in addition to Aelius, Krinagoras in *Anth. Pal.* 9.291, who emphasizes the resilience of Rome in the face of barbarian assault, though here the 'strength (*sthenos*) of Rome' is ultimately dependent on the emperor.
- 19 καὶ ὥσπερ τις ἀνὴρ πολὺ νικῶν τοὺς ἄλλους μεγέθει τε καὶ ῥώμῃ οὐκ ἀγαπᾷ μὴ καὶ ἄλλους ὑπὲρ αὐτὸν ἀράμενος φέρειν, ὥς δὲ καὶ ἦδε ἐπὶ τοσαύτης γῆς ὥκισμένη οὐκ ἀγαπᾷ ἄλλ' ἐτέρας ἰσομετρήτους ὑπὲρ αὐτὴν ἀραμένη φέρει ἄλλας ἐπ' ἄλλαις. ὥς ἄρα ἐπώνυμον αὐτῇ τοῦνομα καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλ' ἢ ῥώμη τὰ τῆδε. ὥστ' εἴ τις αὐτὴν ἐθελήσειε καθαρῶς ἀναπτύξαι καὶ τὰς νῦν μετεώρους πόλεις ἐπὶ γῆς ἐρείσας θεῖναι ἄλλην παρ' ἄλλην, ὅσον νῦν Ἰταλίας διαλεῖπόν ἐστιν, ἀναπληρωθῆναι τοῦτο πᾶν ἂν μοι δοκεῖ καὶ γενέσθαι πόλις συνεχῆς μία ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰόνιον τείνουσα. J. H. Oliver, *The Ruling Power: A Study of the Roman Empire in the Second Century after Christ through the Roman Oration of Aelius Aristides*, *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 43.4, Philadelphia, 1953, section 8.
- 20 Cf. Vitruvius 2.18.17.
- 21 For a brief account of Rome's relations with the Greek world in the second century BC, R.M.Errington, 'Rome against Philip and Antiochus', in *CAH* (2nd edn, 1989), 244–89, P.S.Derow, 'Rome, the fall of Macedon and the sack of Corinth', *ibid.*, 290–323. Ferrary, *op. cit.*, provides a lengthy and important study.
- 22 E.g. *IG* XII.9.931 (Chalcis), *SEG* XXII.214 (Corinth), *SIG*³ 592 (Gytheion), *SIG*³ 616 (Delphi), translated together in R.K.Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus* (Cambridge, 1984), no. 6.
- 23 E.g. *SIG*³ 685.21ff. (Magnesia-on-the-Maeander), *IG* II² 1224 (Lemnos), note esp. L. Robert, *CRAI* 1969, 57–61 and A.Erskine, 'The Romans as common benefactors', *Historia* 43 (1994), 70–87; the evidence is reviewed by Ferrary, *op. cit.*, 124–32.

- 24 E.g. at Delos, Assos, Stratonikeia, see Mellor, op. cit., 113–14.
- 25 S.R.F.Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge, 1984), 23–52.
- 26 C.Habicht, *Gottmenschentum und griechische Städte* (2nd edn, Munich, 1970), Price, op. cit., 23–40.
- 27 *Milet.* 1.7.203, translated as Sherk, op. cit., no. 41; on Roma, Mellor, op. cit., C.Fayer, *Il culto della dea Roma* (Pescara, 1976).
- 28 *IG* X.2.1.4, 31, 32, 133, 226.
- 29 *SIG*³ 705B.45f, see further n. 23.
- 30 Flamininus, see n. 22, also hymn for Flamininus, Plut. *Flam.* 16; A.E.Raubitschek, 'Epigraphical notes on Julius Caesar', *JRS* 44 (1954), 65–75.
- 31 Tac. *Ann.* 4.37, Suet. *Aug.* 52; Price, op. cit.
- 32 For discussion of stanza-division and use as hymn, Bowra, op. cit., 22; for another cult hymn, see n. 30 above.
- 33 *SIG*³ 701, A.Chaniotis, *Historie und Historiker in den griechischen Inschriften* (Stuttgart, 1988), 309–10.
- 34 P.S.Derow and W.G.Forrest, 'An inscription from Chios', *PBSA* 77 (1982), 79–92, lines 24–9.
- 35 Birt, op. cit.
- 36 Tib. 2.5.51.
- 37 Ovid, *Am.* 2.9a.17–18.
- 38 Horace, *Ep.* 16.2.
- 39 Livy, Pref. 4, cf. 30.44.8.

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PART III

GREEKS AND THEIR PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



DIET, DIAITA AND DIETETICS



Elizabeth Craik

This chapter lists ancient foodstuffs; assesses primary sources; outlines theories of change, advance and progress in meeting basic human dietary needs; discusses the Greek ‘Holy Trinity’ of *oinos* (wine), *sitos* (cereal food) and *opson* (accompaniment); then finally examines Hippocratic dietary theory and general ancient practice in relation to modern ideas. A striking and perhaps surprising modernity is apparent not only in Hippocratic theory (ideas of social geography, environmental health, preventive medicine and importance of exercise being allied with dietary considerations) but also in practice (the actual diet of antiquity being in conformity with many modern perceptions of healthy eating).

It may be salutary first to remind ourselves that many of the common foodstuffs we take for granted and associate with Mediterranean or Aegean cuisine were not known in antiquity. The only drinks commonly available were water, wine, milk and fruit juice. Wine no doubt took many forms; but there was no range of fortified wines or spirits, and beer, significantly called ‘barley wine’, was uncommon. The concept of soft drinks (in any case a twentieth-century invention) would have been bewildering in a society where even young children drank wine, suitably diluted with water. Potatoes, tomatoes, aubergines, peppers, oranges and lemons, bananas, peaches, apricots, cherries all came later, some of them much later, to the Mediterranean. There was no rice, no refined sugar (only honey), no cocoa and chocolate.

Other foodstuffs which were known were not always available, due to unavoidable seasonal and regional constraints. Today, on the supermarket shelves of the affluent West, most foodstuffs, be they meat and fish, bread and cakes, fruit and vegetables, are available on a year-round basis—fresh, preserved, processed, canned, frozen. But in the absence of widespread techniques of preservation and mass transport a different situation obtained. Of drinks, milk, which is perishable and not easy to transport, was not in regular supply. Fish was salted and smoked; fruit, especially figs and grapes, and pulses, especially lentils, beans and chickpeas, were dried; oil was extracted from olives; wine was left to mature: but in general food was eaten fresh.

Second, it may be appropriate to have a preliminary survey of the most important primary sources on dietary theory and practice. Archaeology can tell us much about the progressive exploitation of natural resources on which the food supply depended.

From obsidian blades and primitive ploughs, from the dustbins of antiquity and the remains of prehistoric meals, deductions can be made. Considerable technological development had come by the late Bronze Age: for instance, beam presses were already used for the extraction of olive oil. Inscriptions from shrines are informative about the nature of the animals—cattle, sheep, pigs, goats—sacrificed to the different gods, and about the ways in which the meat was apportioned to ritual officiants and worshippers. Temples served as both abattoirs and banqueting halls, with personnel who doubled as butchers and as cooks.

Poets and philosophers, addressing the question of human progress, show a sophisticated perception of the importance of the food supply and its changing phases: food-gathering, hunting, fishing, agriculture, domestication of animals. More specifically, certain authors in certain genres list foodstuffs and describe meals. Generic convention, as always in ancient literature, governs content: epic heroes eat, but tragic heroes do not.¹ An important prose source, particularly about the grain trade, is fourth-century forensic oratory. Cookery books as such have not survived, though Athenaeus clearly knew and utilized the verse compilation of Arkhestratos (Ath. 1.4e, 7.310a). The recipes of Apicius, of Roman imperial date and reconstituted from medieval survivals, are well known today.

Comedy is most informative. Aristophanic plays, 'Old' Comedy, typically end with feasting and revelry, often with a marriage feast. Food for special occasions, such as sesame and honey cakes at weddings, but also the ordinary diet of broths, sausages and breads are extensively mentioned. 'Middle' Comedy survives only in the form of titles of plays and short citations. Many of these come from Athenaeus, writing about AD 200 an extensive and prolix work entitled *Deipnosophistai* (Intellectuals at the Dining Table). This is a series of excerpts rather than a connected discourse. The nature of this work gives inevitably a slanted impression of the nature of 'Middle' Comedy. 'New' Comedy, more domestic in plot content than 'Old', is, perhaps paradoxically, somewhat less food oriented. But cooks are important characters, conventionally portrayed in an unfavourable light as garrulous gossips and self-advertising braggarts.

Scientific literature informs us incidentally about matters of food. Theophrastos' work on plants is of prime importance, not least for its clear perception that the same plant, used as a *pharmakon*, can be in different situations beneficial or harmful, drug or poison (9.17.2). Scientific, or pseudo-scientific, writers of the early empire contain incidental information about plant and animal life: the indefatigable traveller Pausanias is particularly important for local conditions, and the polymath Pliny (Roman in a Graeco-Roman world) with encyclopaedic interests embracing geography, medicine and biology is an invaluable adjunct to the Greek material. Medical literature contains many prescriptions for the ideal diet to be followed in summer and in winter, in sickness and in health, as appropriate to particular local conditions, and the individual's physical constitution. Hippocrates and subsequent writers in the same tradition—Galen, Oribasius and, writing in Latin, Celsus—saw medicine as having three main departments, to do with regimen (*diaita*, of which diet is an important element), to do with drugs (*pharmaka*, some of which are also foodstuffs) and to do with surgery. The patient's view, as expressed in the *Hieroi Logoi* of Aelius Aristeides, in the second century AD, shows a similar range of methods in regimen, combining dietary prescriptions, emetics, exercise and bathing.

In this chapter, most attention is paid to classical sources for their view of the distant past and their present circumstances. Extensive use is made of the Hippocratic Corpus, a particularly important, but often neglected, source.²

Life depends on food, and quality of life depends on the nature of the food supply. As Morgan, extensively quoted and quarried by Engels in his seminal study on the development of human society, put it:

Mankind are the only beings who may be said to have gained an absolute control over the production of food. The great epochs of human progress have been identified, more or less directly, with the enlargement of the sources of subsistence.

(Lewis H. Morgan, *Ancient Society* (London, 1877); see Frederick Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (Zurich, 1884 and reprints); in Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1958), vol. 2, p. 185)

In Engels' postulated progression through three epochs, from savagery to barbarism to civilization, human diet progressed from fruits, nuts and roots (foodgathering phase) to include fish, game birds and game animals (hunting phase with utilization of fire); and ultimately to encompass a wide range of animal and vegetable fare, with domestication and breeding of animals for milk and meat, and cultivation of plants.

Long before communist intellectuals wrestled with dialectical materialism, similar views of human progress were adumbrated in antiquity. There was a general perception, expressed both poetically and in prose, that mastery of *tekhnai* (crafts) furthered control over the environment and the allied progress of civilization; originally humans lived and ate like beasts until technical and practical progress (in which the use of fire marked a crucial new technological phase of paramount importance) led to cultural and social advance. Plato in *Protagoras* presents the eponymous sophist developing the story of Prometheus' gift of fire, which equipped humans with the rudimentary basis of civilized life, including agriculture and control of their food supply (*Prt.* 322a–b). The author of *Prometheus Bound* gives Prometheus a speech listing the benefits he has brought to mankind, notably agriculture:

They had no sure means of knowing winter or flowery spring or fruitful summer, but did everything at random until I showed them the rising of the constellations and their settings, hard to discern...I was the first to bring beasts under the yoke...in short, all *tekhnai* (crafts) come from Prometheus... (Aesch. *PV* 454–8, 462, 506; cf. Hesiod *Works and Days* on the farmer's year)

Similarly, Sophocles' chorus in *Antigone* sing in the first stasimon (332–75) of power over sea and land (sailing and agriculture) and over the animal world (hunting and domestication) as important evolutionary stages.

The author of *On Ancient Medicine* draws an analogy between the different dietary requirements of the sick and the healthy, and the different character of a bestial and a civilized diet:

And, further back still, I think that not even the *diaita* and *trophe* (regimen and food) of the healthy, at present practised, would have been discovered,

if it had been adequate for humans to eat and drink the same things as an ox, a horse, and every creature except humans—such as the things that spring from the earth, fruit, tree-bark and grass. For on these they are fed and they grow and live without trouble, having no need of any other *diaita*. And I declare it is my opinion that in the beginning mankind too followed this sort of *trophe*. In my view, our present *diaitemata* (ways of regimen) were discovered and devised and evolved over a long period of time.

(Hipp. VM 3; cf. VM 7 on our savage and bestial origins)

Cereal cultivation is a mark of civilization in the Hesiodic comment, on early man, that ‘they did not eat *sitos* (grain)’ (WD 146–7); similarly Herodotus’ remark ‘they grow and eat grain’ (Hdt. 4.17) indicates an advanced stage of human development.

In many versions of myth as early history, as in the case of Prometheus’ gift of fire, divine dispensation is an adjunct to human effort and invention. Thus, in *Bacchae*, Euripides gives Teiresias a speech suggesting that Demeter and Dionysus represent supreme benefits (as ‘a Loaf of Bread, a Flask of Wine’):

Two things are paramount for the human race: the goddess Demeter; she is Earth; call her by which of the two names you prefer. She nurtures humans on dry foods. The one who came later, the son of Semele, discovered the moist drink of the vine and gave it to mortals: it releases unhappy humans from sorrow, when they take their fill of the sheen from the vine, and gives sleep and oblivion of our daily misfortunes; there is no other cure for troubles.

(E.Ba. 274–83)

To grain and wine, divine dispensations of Demeter and Poseidon, may be added olives, Athena’s gift to the Athenians when she battled with Poseidon for possession of Athens: ‘Poseidon came first to Attica, and, striking with his trident, created a salt well. After him came Athena, and making King Cecrops witness of her taking over the land, she planted an olive tree, which is still shown’ (Apollod. 3.14.1). The continued presence of the sacred olive, symbolizing the state itself through continuity with the tree originally gifted by Athena, is authenticated by Pausanias (1.27.2); and Herodotus tells the story of its miraculous renewal, with the swift appearance of a vigorous new shoot from the parent stem, soon after the destruction of the precinct, complete with tree, by the Persian forces (Hdt. 8.55).

Plato, more pragmatically and without recourse to myth, but still with the same general tenor, outlines in *Republic* the first stages in the evolution of the state in this way:

But assuredly the first and greatest of needs for existence and life is the acquisition of *trophe* (food)...and secondly of shelter...third of clothing and the like.... Will they not produce *sitos* (cereals) and *oinos* (wine) and clothing and shoes...they will be fed on barley, preparing barley meal, and on wheat, preparing flour, baking the latter in loaves and the former in flat cakes, setting out their fine cakes and loaves on reeds and clean leaves...and they and their children will feast, drinking wine...

(Pl. *Rep.* 369d, 371c)

But when someone objects that there is to be no *opson* (accompaniment), the reply comes,

I forgot that they are to have an accompaniment also: certainly salt, and olives, and cheese; and they will boil up root and leaf vegetables, such as may be found for cooking in the countryside. And I suppose we shall provide them also with *tragemata* (sweet things), with figs and pulses and beans; and they will roast myrtle berries and acorns in the ashes by the fire...

(*Rep.* 372c–d)

Plato regards the three basic components of diet as *sitos*, *oinos* and *opson*—commonly plural, *opsa*—and this threefold view of dietary needs is expressed or briefly assumed elsewhere (as Hom. *Od.* 3.480, Thuc. 1.138); *tragemata* seem sometimes to be regarded as a special kind of *opsa*, sometimes as a more luxurious adjunct to the meal, especially of a sweet kind. *Sitos* is commonly used of food generally, but also of solid food as opposed to drink (Hdt. 5.34), or cereal food as opposed to meat (*Od.* 9.9, 12).

The centrality of cereal foods in the ancient diet and the nature and range of accompanying *opsa* are of paramount importance in discussing its nutritional value. An awareness of the centrality of food in general as a determinant of quality of life is implicit in the use of the term *diaita* to mean both ‘diet’ (with specific reference to food, almost synonymous with *trophe*, food, nourishment (cf. Hipp. *Alim.* 8)) and ‘way of life’, ‘regimen’ in more general terms.

We now examine the components *sitos* and *opson*, which together with *oinos* are key foodstuffs. *Sitos* was commonly used as a generic term for grain, embracing the two types most commonly used, *pyros*, wheat and *krithe*, barley. *Alphita* is barley meal, *aleura* wheat flour; *maza* is barley cake and *artos* wheaten loaf. The importance of cereals, especially barley, in the diet can be seen in the common metaphorical use of *alphita* for ‘daily bread’ (Ar. *Eq.* 1104 etc.). *Oulai*, barley groats, also had a common ritual significance, the sacrificial animal being sprinkled with, or in some cases made to eat, this fodder. For most people, cereal foods were the filling dietary staple; but there was much regional variation in the availability, character, processing and preparation of these. Many different names were given to local variants on the theme. ‘Bread’ as a generic term may describe the regular end result; but much ancient bread would scarcely be recognized as ‘bread’ today. In particular, the *maza*, flat barley cake, would look unfamiliar. Today, bread is not generally made from barley at all, because the proteins do not form a gluten when mixed with water, and it is impossible to obtain an aerated loaf.

Barley, a cereal tolerant of poorer soils and a range of climatic conditions, was most commonly grown in Greece, while wheat was regularly imported. Few ancient communities could grow enough grain for local needs and depended on a substantial import trade from Sicily, Egypt and the Pontus region. In this situation, a certain anxiety about the continuation of supplies was inevitable. In Athens, much litigation arose from the attempts of profiteering traders to evade laws designed to safeguard the city’s food supply. The prosecutor in a Demosthenic speech describes the activities of an international cartel:

Some of them would despatch the goods from Egypt, others would sail with the merchandise, others would remain here and make arrangements for the

consignments. Then those who stayed in Athens would send letters to those overseas detailing the market prices so that if grain were high in Athens they would bring it here, but if the price went down, they would sail to some other port...

(Dem. 56.8; cf. Hdt. 4.17 on the Pontic trade in grain)

Hippocrates was a great believer in the nutritive value of barley, and prescribed porridges and gruels of various consistencies for many conditions: his standbys are *ptisane*, barley gruel, a decoction of the grain, and barley water served strained or unstrained:

Now I think that *ptisane* has properly been preferred over other cereal foods in illnesses of this kind, and I applaud those who express this preference; for its gluten is smooth, homogeneous, gentle, emollient, quite soft, thirst-quenching and easy to evacuate.

(*Acut.* 10)

Ptisane should be made from the finest barley, and boiled as thoroughly as possible, especially if you mean to use more than the liquid alone...

(*Acut.* 15)

Elsewhere, methods of adding barley to a variety of liquids are described: with water, wine, honey or milk the *kykeon*, a nourishing drink, is made (*Vict.* 2.41). That solids of barley meal served as a key ingredient in the *kykeon* is evident from Heraclitus' aphorism, that the *kykeon* separates out if it is not being (continuously) stirred. In Homer the other ingredients are wine, cheese and honey (*Il.* 11.624). Hippocrates disapproves of this drink for invalids: 'Some at the onset of serious illness have eaten solid food on the first day, others on the next day, others again have eaten any pap (*rophemata*) they happened to get, others again even *kykeon*' (*Acut.* 39).

Other medical writers, according to Athenaeus, expatiated on the different qualities of barley and wheat, and on the relative merits of finely milled flour and coarsely milled meal:

We shall not dine until you have heard from us everything that the sons of the Asklepiadai (i.e. medical men) have said about wheaten loaves...and barley meal. First Diphilos of Siphnos, in 'Foods for Sickness and Health', says bread made from wheat is more nourishing, more easily assimilated and in every way superior to that made from barley.... Philistios of Lokris says that bread made from refined flour is intrinsically better for giving strength than is that from coarse flour.... Mnesitheos says that wheat bread is easier to digest than barley cake...

(Ath. 3.115c, d, f)

The general view was that the whiter the better (Ath. 3.124a). Theophrastus too differentiated various kinds of wheat, with particular reference to relative food value (8–4.3).

The principles of Hippocrates are followed in this modern recipe (Simon 1963) for Barley Water:

Take a small teacup of pearl barley, wash in cold water and place in a jug. Peel a lemon very thin and place the peel on the barley, add three or four lumps of sugar and pour on three pints of boiling water. Let it stand until cool and strain off carefully. It should be a light green colour.

Barley is a key ingredient also in Scotch Broth, that most hearty soup. Apicius' recipe for barley broth, with lentils, dried peas, leeks and cabbage, is in essence the same as that commonly followed today (Apicius 4.4.1 and 2). The preparation of a single staple cereal food as solid porridge or liquid gruel is readily paralleled in rural Scotland—oats in this case, not barley.

The *opson* is anything eaten with bread. Plato regards salt, olives and cheese as basic; and suggests that root and leaf vegetables, growing wild, would typically be gathered to serve as *opson*. That fish was common may be seen in the survival in Modern Greek of the word *psari* (from the diminutive *opsarion*) as the regular word for fish; and also from Strabo's use of the term *opson*, fish, and *opsopolia*, fishmarket, in an anecdote told of Iasos:

When a singer was giving a performance, for a time everyone listened; but when the bell sounded for the fishmarket they all went off to get fish, except one man who was a bit deaf. So the singer went up to him and said, 'My good fellow, I'm very grateful to you for your courtesy and your love of music, for the others went off as soon as they heard the bell.' And he replied, 'What's that you say? Has the bell gone already?' And when the singer said it had, he said 'Goodbye, then,' got up and went away as well.

(Str. 14.2.21)

Fish was preserved by pickling in salt, and by smoking. Simple smoking over a wood fire can produce an excellent flavour. Oak-smoked salmon or trout is regarded today as a delicacy; and other smoked fish, such as kippers (smoked herring) still provide practical everyday food.

Hippocrates, in a lengthy list of different foods, arranged by type, has a section on pulses and seeds before those on meat, poultry, fish, eggs, cheese, beverages, honey, vegetables and fruits (Hipp. *Vict.* 2.45–55). The importance of vegetables, and of herbal remedies, may be seen also in a lengthy, probably late, sequence of recipecures (Hipp. *Morb.* 3.17; cf. also the specifics in the gynaecological treatises). The Roman physician Celsus has a still more detailed and extensive list of foods, following Hippocrates in stressing their 'strong' or 'weak' qualities and in emphasizing their diuretic and digestive virtues; he concludes with a certain self-deprecating scepticism: 'But doctors use all these foodstuffs, on their own and in combination, in different ways, so that it is clear that each doctor uses what he believes right rather than what he has discovered to be right in reality' (Celsus 2.33.18–36).

Apicius' cookery book follows, in the compilation which has come down to us, an arrangement similar to that adopted by Hippocrates (garden produce, pulses, birds, animals, fish); and indeed such broad categorization remains standard, as in Simon (1963: sauces, vegetables, cereals, fruit, fish, meat, birds and eggs, cheese, wine). Hippocrates' list is of great interest as a serious survey of commonly available and favoured foods. The aim is to compare like with like (meat with meat etc.), not to

elevate any type to the exclusion of another. Its salient elements are worth attention: the section on pulses and seeds includes beans, peas, chickpeas, sesame and poppy; the section on meat and game includes beef, goatmeat, pork, lamb and mutton, ass-meat, meat of dogs and puppies, wild boars, venison, hares, foxes, hedgehogs; the section on poultry and game-birds includes doves, partridges, pigeons, cocks, geese, ducks; the section on fish includes shellfish, as well as fish from rivers, ponds and lakes, marshes and the sea; the section on vegetables and herbs includes garlic, onion, leek, radish, cress, mustard, coriander, pennyroyal, marjoram, thyme and hyssop; the section on fruits includes mulberry, pears, apples, quinces, pomegranates, grapes, figs; and nuts included are almonds and acorns.

Many of the foods in Hippocrates' lists would have been eaten as and when available; few would have been part of the daily fare. There was no doubt much variation, not only with regional and seasonal constraints, but also with personal opportunities and preferences. In wartime there was serious disruption of the food supply. Aristophanic characters differentiate sharply between the harsh realities of wartime shortages, and the dreamlike evocation of peace and plenty. And, naturally, there was a gulf in standard of living between the richest and the poorest members of society: Aristophanes expresses this by a contrast between hard-working olive pickers and a sybarite living in the midst of hare and creamy puddings (Ar. V. 708–10; for hare as a delicacy see also *Ach.* 1006, *Pax* 1196; but contrast Hippocrates' view, *Vict.* 2.46, that it is dry and costive). Eels, especially Kopaic eels from Boiotia, were generally regarded as a delicacy, as they are today in Holland: 'Look, I'm bringing geese, hares, and foxes, moles, hedgehogs, weasels and badgers, martens, otters and eels from Lake Kopais. (Response) Bringer of the tastiest morsel to mankind, let me speak to the eels, if you're really bringing them' (Ar. *Ach.* 878–82).

Aristophanic banquets can be seen as an extrapolation of Athenian daily life. Guests would bring some food and drink, while the host would provide setting, sweets and entertainment:

Come quickly to supper, bringing your hamper and jug.... Do hurry up.
You've been holding back the meal. Everything else is ready—couches, tables,
pillows, blankets, wreaths, perfume, sweets, girls to take to bed, scones,
buns, sesame cakes, honey cakes, girls to dance...come as fast as you can...

(Ar. *Ach.* 1085–94; a happy bring-your-own-food-and-bottle arrangement)

As we saw, one of the first foods Plato thought of as *opson* was the olive. Olives, amenable to preservation and processing; and tolerant, like barley, of poor soil, are significant both as fruit and as source of oil. Olive oil served, with herbs, as a kind of savoury spread, and was vital in cooking. It served also in personal hygiene in place of soap, and was used as lamp oil. Olive groves became emblematic of the Attic countryside. Strepsiades, a rustic character in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, describes his halcyon youth as 'overflowing with bees [honey], sheep [cheese] and olive-cakes' (Ar. *Nu.* 45). Certain olive trees remained sacrosanct, and even the stumps of these sacred olives were assiduously protected by law. In a late fifth-century speech of defence against the charge of destroying such a tree, the defendant pleads:

My accuser says that, in the archonship of Souniades, an olive-stump was destroyed by me...yet he is unable to show that I was compelled by poverty

to embark on such actions, in that my land was deteriorating because of the presence of the stump, nor that it was in the way of vines, nor near the house, nor that I was unaware of the risk of trial before you...

(Lys. 7.11, 14)

Grapes and figs were regularly dried for preservation, being better adapted to this process than apples and pears, ubiquitous in season but, especially pears, not easy to keep or to dry. Dried figs in particular were sold cheaply, and eaten as sweet snacks. In Aristophanes' *Wasps*, a boy wheedling his father to give him a treat asks for figs, which are normally plentiful; but the father has fallen on hard times:

BOY: Will you give me something, Dad, if I ask it?

FATHER: Of course, son. Tell me, what nice thing do you want me to buy? I suppose you'll ask for dice before anything else.

BOY: No way—dried figs, Daddy, for they're nice.

FATHER: No, no way—you'll be hanged first.... From my poor wage here I have to buy provisions, firewood and an accompaniment for three of us. And you ask me for figs!

(Ar. V. 291–303)

Among vegetables, a broad distinction was made, as in the passage of Plato quoted (*Rep.* 372c–d), between root vegetables and leafy greens. Sometimes, terms are generic not specific. But onion and garlic were certainly popular (see Hdt. 2.125.6; Ar. *Lys.* 797). In the case of herbs and spices, which were profusely used, precise identification is not always possible.

Plato's salt, olives and cheese were all of them ready to eat; and the fruit or vegetables he mentions would be eaten raw or with minimal cooking. As opposed to these, cooked accompaniments, were typically pulses: cheap, nourishing, readily available everyday fare. Hippocrates significantly lists pulses before animal foods, even fish. And the general attitude to them can be seen in the comment of a character in Aristophanes' *Plutus*: 'Now that he's rich he doesn't care for lentils any more' (Ar. *Pl.* 1004). Pulses might be eaten in a simple unadulterated form, made into filling broths, or ground into flour for baking in loaves or sprinkling on wine.

Many birds, including many small wild birds, were regularly eaten. Aristophanes corroborates Hippocrates' list; and the birds of *Birds* view themselves as natural enemies of men, at the mercy of hunters:

Every bird-catcher sets up his nooses and traps and snares and nets and meshes and coils and cages; then when they've caught you they sell you *en masse*; and others buy you, pinching your flesh; and even then if they decide to do so, they do not serve you up after simple roasting; but they grate cheese over you; with oil, *silphion* (asafoetida?) and vinegar; and after rubbing together some other sweet and juicy sauce they pour the warm stuff all over you, as if you were dead and dry.

(Ar. *Av.* 526–38; cf. 334–5, 344, 371, etc. and for thrushes Ar. *Ach.* 1116)³

The idea of eating small birds, such as larks and thrushes, was acceptable in quite recent times; according to Simon (1963:575):

Larks are still occasionally eaten, in England, in the traditional steak, oyster, kidney and lark pie...there was a time when considerable numbers of these little birds were also eaten roast....

No true gastronome would countenance the killing of a thrush for food, even if ready to admit that it was quite as good as a lark on occasions when a thrush found its way by accident into the classical steak-kidney-oyster-and-lark pie. On the Continent, thrushes are killed and eaten without any qualms of conscience, like many other small songsters, but it is rather unexpected to find a recipe given by gentle Mrs Beeton for roasting one.

Small domestic animals and poultry, like small animals and birds which had been hunted, were cooked privately in the home. But large animals were most commonly cooked publicly and eaten at state festivals. Already in Homer, there are detailed descriptions of sacrificial arrangements. For instance, in Nestor's Pylos the populace of some 4,500 men gathers on the seashore for a multiple offering, probably of nine bulls, to Poseidon. Each of the nine tribal groups provides nine animals, of which it seems that only one is to be killed. This is followed by the sacrifice of a cow to Athena. In both cases, there are details corresponding with the skilled practices of the modern butcher: the offal is removed and cooked separately before the main barbecue; the cow is bled from the neck and the blood evidently reserved for black pudding (Hom. *Od.* 3 *init.* and *fin.*). In a sacrifice at Hellenistic Cos, some rather similar provisions are detailed (W.L.Paton and E.L.Hicks, *The Inscriptions of Cos* (Oxford, 1891), 37=*SIG* 1025).⁴ There, various cuts of beef are allocated to certain participants. The most important family is given the *notou dikreas*, 'the double meat of the back', clearly the cut now known as 'baron of beef, that is (Simon 1963:399):

The noblest joint of beef consisting of both Sirloins cooked and carved whilst left uncut at the backbone. The Baron of Beef is usually roasted upon a spit and it has been for many years one of the outstanding features of the banquets served at the Guildhall in the City of London.

Game animals were appreciated when available. Hares, especially—a good size for the household—are often mentioned. That they were the huntsman's most common quarry is evident from Xenophon's stress on hares in his treatise on hunting (Xen. *Cyn.* 5 etc.); other animals commonly hunted were deer, boars and wild sheep, goats or (as Xen. *Cyrop.* 1.4.7) asses. Apicius gives thirteen recipes for hare, along with ten for boar and three for wild sheep. Hares and partridges, excellent for the pot, could become a menace to crops:

there came to be so many hares in Astypalaia that the islanders consulted the oracle about them. The Pythia told them to keep dogs and hunt. In a single year more than six thousand hares were caught. This plague of hares came from the introduction of two hares into Astypalaia by a man from Anaphe; he did this because earlier, after a man from Astypalaia had introduced two partridges into Anaphe, they multiplied to such an extent that the inhabitants were in danger of extinction.

(Ath. 9.400d)

Hares are familiar enough. But Hippocrates' inclusion of dog and ass as edible animals may be more surprising (Hipp. *Vict.* 2.46), as may Aristophanes' inclusion of foxes, moles, hedgehogs, weasels and badgers as edible (Ar. *Ach.* 878–80). However, personal and ethnic tastes arise from conditioning and habit, not from universal imperatives. *Bœuf* and *cheval* are alike available in France, though only the former is acceptable for human consumption across the English channel. (Horse meat is, however, a major component in canned petfood.) According to Simon (1963:396), 'In China, wild asses used to provide sport in times of peace and food for the troops in times of war'; and donkey-meat eaten during the siege of Paris in 1870 was said to be 'like mutton in colour, firm and savoury'. Dog too is regularly eaten in China; and it too, as well as cat meat, was eaten during the Parisian siege. On hedgehog, listed by both Hippocrates and Aristophanes, Simon (1963:442) notes: 'Gipsies are always on the lookout for hedgehogs to kill and eat.... The flesh is said by some to taste like roast chicken and by others like sucking pig.' Similarly, the badgers of Aristophanes' list can be paralleled in Somerset in recent times: the flesh, which is described as 'rich and porky', might be cured like bacon, to 'furnish a real and unusual delicacy' (Simon 1963:398).

Hippocratic theories of nutrition may at first sight seem simplistic, based on rough-and-ready ideas of affinities and differences allied with sympathetic magic. Certainly, they are governed by a fixed scheme of four humours and four qualities (hot, cold, wet and dry); and many observations are forced to fit neatly into this framework. Hippocrates puts much store on the nature of the individual (young, old, man, woman):

A child is a blend of moist and warm elements, because of these he is composed and in these he grew.... A youth is a blend of warm and dry elements.... A man, once his body is mature, is dry and cold.... Old men are cold and moist. ...The males of all species are warmer and drier, while the females are moister and colder...

(Hipp. *Vict.* 1.33–4)

Season and location are important: in winter, to maintain a dry and hot body, it is advisable to eat roast meat and few vegetables, while in summer it is better to switch to boiled meat and softer foods. Similarly, southern climes engender a hot and dry constitution in their inhabitants (Hipp. *VM* 10). For a doctor to understand his patients' needs, he must first study their place of abode (Hipp. *Aer.* 1).

But these theories are subjected to refinement. Hippocrates is well aware of the complexities of human physiology, and takes issue with thinkers who regard bodily make-up as simple and uniform (Hipp. *VM* 15). Furthermore, foods, it is argued, are not intrinsically good or bad, but good or bad for something or someone:

Cheese does not harm all people alike, but there are some people who can eat as much of it as they like without the slightest adverse effects; indeed it is a wonderfully strengthening food for those people it agrees with. But others suffer dreadfully.

(Hipp. *VM* 20)

Routine, to the Hippocratic doctor, is of great importance, and even such a simple change in practice as a change from one to two meals a day, or vice versa, can be detrimental (Hipp. *VM* 10).

Implicit in these apparently facile observations are some more profound perceptions: that different individuals have different needs; that the same individual has different needs at different ages and in different seasons; that to understand the patient in illness it is useful to understand the patient in health; that what we eat affects how we function; that some illnesses affect all inhabitants of a region while others are peculiar to individuals in it; that environment cannot be disregarded as a factor in human well-being. These perceptions are in line with such modern catch-phrases as social geography, environmental health, preventive medicine and they are at the root of the homeopathic principles formulated under their influence in the nineteenth century.

A fundamental aspect of Hippocratic *diata* is a postulated link between diet and exercise as promoters of health. This ideal is not unique to the Hippocratics: Plato regarded the science of medicine as akin to activities of the gymnasium, and the association was probably commonplace. Once again, however, Hippocratic ideas are in line with the modern view that good health is promoted by a combination of sensible diet and physical exercise. Emetics, much favoured by Hippocratic doctors, are not formally approved today. But in a society where bulimia is a common eating disorder, perhaps here too there are some unexpected resonances.

From these general observations on coincidences between Hippocratic and modern theory, let us go on to consider Greek dietary practice in relation to modern practical knowledge of food and nutrition. To define modern knowledge in this area is less easy than, perhaps, it ought to be. The professional discipline of food science or dietetics or nutrition addresses a complex and specialized body of knowledge, related to chemistry, biochemistry and physiology. Side by side with this important twentieth-century academic growth area, there has been a growth also in popular leisure interest in food, both in the home kitchen and in restaurants; and simultaneously an almost obsessive general concern with weight-watching and calorie-counting. Ever more specialized books address this or that problem, real or imagined, actual or prospective, serious or cosmetic, with ever more sophisticated dietary advice.

Our survival depends on food, but many different kinds of dietary practice would keep us alive. Today in the Western world we have the luxury of choice: choice in quantity, quality and variety of foodstuffs—to patronize delicatessen or fast-food outlet, to be carnivorous or vegetarian, and so on. Hence we are bombarded with advice to eat the ‘right’ foods. But concern with getting enough to eat has generally predominated—as it still does predominate in many parts of the world—over concern with the nature of the food eaten; starvation, malnutrition and deficiencies in essential dietary needs have always been there, and have not gone away. The opportunity to choose what, when, where and how much to eat is not altogether natural; and it does not seem to have done us much good.

The so-called diseases of civilization—in particular, coronary heart disease, hypertension, diverticulitis and certain kinds of cancer—are commonly attributed to diets high in refined sugar, fat and salt, and low in fibre. The general food advice today is to eat less sugar and salt, less fat (especially animal fat), less red meat; to avoid artificial additives and, instead, to eat more fresh and fibre-rich food, especially fruit and vegetables. Clearly, the Greeks were living in conformity with this general advice. They ate bread of wholemeal, not of refined flour; ate pulses and vegetables;

ate more fish and poultry than beef; used olive oil, not butter; used honey, not refined sugar; used herbs with salt, thus requiring less salt to convey flavour; and, lacking extensive means of conservation and refrigeration, they ate fresh food in season. In all this, their diet resembles that of Greeks in the early twentieth century, and to this day in places untouched by tourism. An important corrective to this perhaps romantic picture is their total ignorance of germs. Notions of culinary and personal hygiene were primitive, and bacterial food poisoning must have been commonplace. It may be too that the heavy use of herbs and of vinegar was not always to enhance flavour, but rather to mask an unpleasant odour of mould or incipient putrefaction. The food preservatives which meet so much obloquy in the modern world are arguably preferable to these ancient hazards. Also, given the chance, the Greeks too would have preferred foods less 'good' for them. Refined white flour was prized, but simply not generally available (Ath. 3.124a; cf. Ar. *Nu.* 262). And animal fats were eschewed more by accident than design. Fats in the diet were a mark of luxury to Aristophanic characters: a pudding made of the first milk after calving, made by curdling the milk over heat, was particularly praised (Ar. *V.* 710, *Pax* 1150). The words 'Ye shall eat the fat of the land' (Genesis 45.18), were in context a promise of well-being and high living, though today sounding more like a threat or a reproach.

It is standard practice in modern study of nutrition to assign nutrients to broad categories, of which the two most important are proteins and carbohydrates. These categories define the essential components to be balanced in a healthy diet. They are convenient labels, rather than mutually exclusive groups. Very few naturally occurring foods are 'pure' protein or 'pure' carbohydrate, and this is even more true of prepared foods. Crossing of the groups may be seen in that bread (often dismissed as mere carbohydrate) contains protein, which may be as high as 10 per cent in wholemeal varieties, and so has a nutritional value often forgotten or unrecognized. Similarly, pulses (generally regarded as protein-rich) may be pounded into flour to make a kind of bread, which is then eaten as a filler food or carbohydrate. Reminding ourselves first that the Greeks lacked any knowledge of such food groups, it may be useful to examine their diet in relation to the broad categories—proteins, carbohydrates, fats, mineral elements and vitamins.

Protein builds and renews the body. Amino acids are the building blocks of which protein in foods and in the body are composed. Some twenty in number, amino acids combine in different proportions in different foods and in different parts of the body. Eight are essential: isoleucine, leucine, lysine, methionine, phenylalanine, threonine, tryptophan and valine, with, in childhood, additionally arginine and histidine. Protein from animal sources—such as meat, milk and eggs—contains all the essential amino acids in roughly the proportions the body requires, and so have been described as 'first-class proteins'. The Greek diet, with regular access to eggs and cheese, but containing meat only at irregular intervals, might be regarded as relatively poor, or deficient in protein. However, it is now realized that, although no single vegetable food has amino acids in such ideal proportions as meat, a combination of vegetable sources can give a high-quality supply of protein. By eating different vegetable foods together, an excellent diet can be achieved. For example, wheat is low in lysine, but adequate in methionine, while beans are the reverse. Accordingly,

in the combination of these two, complementary proteins are utilized. More generally, as grains, nuts and seeds complement pulses, the range of possible nutritious combinations is extensive. The Greek barley cake, eaten with pulses, was protein-rich, as—on the same principle—are Mexican tortilla with refried beans or Middle Eastern pitta bread with hummus or cereal with nuts in breakfast muesli. These foods have no doubt arisen from generations of common-sense empirical observation that they are palatable and healthy. Such combinations are also good mixes of protein and carbohydrate.

Carbohydrates—sugars and starches, also dietary fibre—are sources of heat and energy, and are of plant origin. Sugar exists in different forms: sucrose (and refined sugar is almost pure sucrose); fructose and glucose (and honey is made up of these); dextrose (and this occurs naturally in fruit). Excess consumption of sucrose is implicated in many modern ills—certainly obesity, probably diabetes and heart disease. It is difficult to measure and moderate sugar intake, as sugar is added to many modern Western foods, from muesli to tomato ketchup. In antiquity, when only naturally occurring sugars, those in honey and in fruit, were consumed, the diet was healthier in sugar content. Starch is present in seeds, such as cereal grains and pulses, which, as we have seen, were eaten in abundance. Dietary fibre or ‘roughage’ is a term used to describe carbohydrates not broken down by the digestive enzymes, and so passing through the body quickly; more properly, these are cellulose, hemicellulose, gum, pectin and lignin. All fresh fruit and vegetables contain fibre. Fibre-rich foods which figured in the Greek diet are dried figs, nuts, bran and beans.

Fats or lipids in the diet serve as a very effective source of heat and energy, as well as providing essential fatty acids and making food more palatable. Excessive fat consumption leads to obesity and may contribute to diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. Saturated fats (that is, fats of which the molecules of carbon, oxygen and hydrogen are so constituted that further hydrogen cannot be added) are especially implicated in that they heighten levels of blood cholesterol in the body and so increase susceptibility to coronary heart disease. Whereas animal fats are mostly saturated, most vegetable fats are unsaturated. Olive oil is now recognized to be a first-rate source of monounsaturated fat. The cold-pressed variety, or ‘virgin’ olive oil, which is most highly prized, most resembles that produced in antiquity. In this respect too a healthy diet was followed.

Mineral elements and vitamins are multifarious, occurring to different degrees in different foods, but may conveniently be treated together. The body needs about a dozen mineral elements (of which the two most important are calcium and phosphorus) in considerable amounts, and many others (known as essential trace elements) to a lesser degree. Minerals work in groups, and balance in the body is important—between, for instance, phosphorus and calcium, or sodium and potassium. Modern techniques in agriculture, with the use of phosphates as fertilizers, and in food processing, with the addition of salt to many foods leading to excess of sodium, can upset this delicate balance. The Greek diet was free of such hazards. However, it was open to the hazard of mineral deficiencies, because of its vegetarian, or near-vegetarian, character. Many foods regularly consumed did, however, meet essential mineral needs: bran is particularly mineral-rich, containing iron (also present in dried figs and in beans), zinc (also present in almonds) and copper (also present in

currants). Essential calcium would have been gained from cheese and almonds; phosphorus from dried fruits and iodine from fish.

There are thirteen major vitamins—A, C, D, E, K and the eight which together make up the B complex. (The labelling by letters of the alphabet indicates not relative importance, but simply the order in which they were discovered in the course of the twentieth century.) As vitamins are stored in many different foods, a varied diet is the best way to secure all that is necessary for health. Some vitamins dissolve in water, some in fat. The difference is important to the body's absorption and retention: water-soluble vitamins (B and C) cannot be stored in the body and need daily renewal, whereas fat-soluble vitamins (A, D, E, K) are stored in the liver and can accumulate. The effects of vitamin deficiency are now well understood: deficiency of vitamin D causes rickets; deficiency of vitamin C, ascorbic acid, leads to scurvy; deficiency of the B vitamins leads to beriberi. The Greeks' main source of vitamin A would have been leafy greens and fish oil; of the B group bread and flour; of C fresh fruit and vegetables; of D oily fish; of K again leafy greens, such as parsley.

Today, people are much more likely to ingest too many vitamins and minerals than too few, as so many of these are unnecessarily added to food. But at the same time, many of today's common drugs contain substances which prevent proper absorption of vitamins and minerals: alcohol inhibits absorption of magnesium; cigarettes inhibit absorption of vitamin C; the contraceptive pill inhibits absorption of vitamin E. And such common substances as coffee and aspirin can have similar effects. Further, the many complex additives to food (colourings, dyes, flavourings, antioxidants, emulsifiers—the so-called 'E' numbers) have adverse effects not fully understood, which may in some cases outweigh their originally intended benefits.

It seems then that Hippocratic recommendations on *diaita* approximated in several respects to the orthodox Western ideology of health in the late twentieth century; and that, by accident of availability, the ancient diet approximated to that now approved and recommended. However, the people may simply have enjoyed their food, when they could get it. 'The pleasure of the belly is the origin and the root of all good' (Epicur. fr. 409). It was left to philosophers to preach control over appetite as an aspect of *sophrosyne*, and to later moralists to link gluttony with avarice, envy, lust, pride, sloth and wrath as a deadly sin.

NOTES

- 1 With the growth of realism in tragic presentation at the end of the fifth century, mundane matters such as food do become more prominent. Sophocles' hero Philoktetes has reverted to a primitive existence. He has a cup of rough-hewn wood and the means to kindle fire (35); but he suffers from dire hunger (186), having no agriculture (708), and only his bow to shoot birds and beasts for food (710–12, 955–6, 1091–3). The chorus lament that he has drunk no wine while marooned on Lemnos, and has been forced to drink from stagnant pools (713–17).
- 2 'Hippocrates' is used as a convenient shorthand to indicate the author of any of the Hippocratic treatises. On Hippocratic authorship, see E.M.Craik, *The Dorian Aegean* (London, 1980), Chapter 6.

- 3 Here, as commonly elsewhere, there is extensive *double entendre* based on food: see J.J.Henderson, *The Maculate Muse* (New Haven and London, 1975), 142–4.
- 4 On coincidences between the Homeric and the Hellenistic ritual, see E.M.Craik, 'Homer's Dorians', *LCM* 7.7 (1982), 94–101.

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GREEK ENGINEERING

The case of Eupalinos' tunnel



T.E.Rihll and J.V.Tucker

1. INTRODUCTION

Greek engineering and technology are generally undervalued, sometimes to the point of being unknown, forgotten, or ignored, in the minds and writing of ancient historians. For example, architecture can be discussed without any reference to how the buildings were constructed; trade can be discussed without any reference to how goods were manufactured; the economy can be discussed without any reference to how silver coins were produced. Our understanding of Greek society is incomplete if we know nothing of the methods by which the Greeks solved significant problems of the ordinary everyday variety, like finding and distributing drinking water, as well as of the rarer kind, like temple building.

To show the sort of interesting Greek achievements which are being overlooked, we shall discuss one outstanding example of Greek engineering: the tunnel of Eupalinos, which was undertaken to bring good water to the population of Samos every day, and was also an extraordinary project.

In Section 2 we briefly describe the island of Samos, and give Herodotus' record of the tunnel. In Sections 3 and 4 we give a full description of the tunnel and discuss its construction in detail. A central technical problem we address is that of the alignment, which is rich in implications for the history of the tunnel and for Greek engineering in general. In Section 5 we discuss some implications of this and other engineering projects for Samian history.

2. SAMOS

Samos is a relatively green and fertile Greek island, about 19 km wide and 45 km long at greatest extent, and about 490 km² in area. It is separated from the peninsula of Mykale in Asia Minor by the Samos strait. Archaeological material testifies to the Dark Age in Samos having ended in the ninth century.

Samos was relatively quick to develop. She was one of the first Greek communities to build a monumental temple,¹ to develop ancillary structures in the temple precincts,² to explore and settle abroad,³ to be led by a tyrant,⁴ and to build a large and powerful navy.⁵ Her historical zenith comes early, in the sixth century.

During this century the fortifications, breakwater and tunnel were built.⁶ Slightly

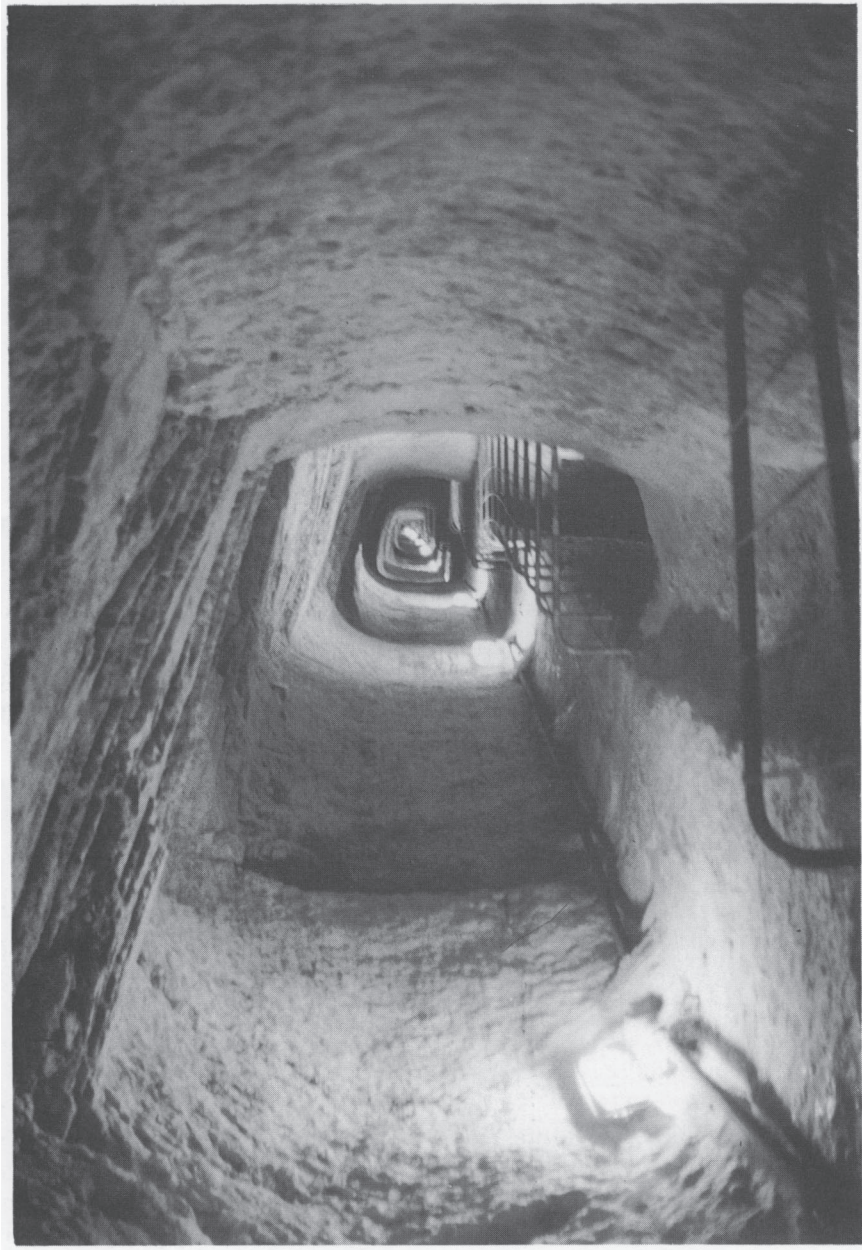


Figure 18.1 Eupalinos' tunnel (southern section looking north).

over 6.4 km in length, the walls enclose the city, the top and southern slope of Mount Kastro,⁷ and the farmland between Kastro and the sea. The breakwater extends about 400 m into the sea, protecting the harbour from southerly winds. The tunnel pierces Kastro's west end, and is a little over one kilometre long.

Eupalinos' tunnel was already famous by Herodotus' time. He says, in effect, that the tunnel is the greatest achievement of the Greeks:

I have talked at some length on the history of the Samians because theirs are the three greatest works of all the Greeks. One is a tunnel⁸ through the base of a mountain 150 fathoms high.⁹ The length of the tunnel is 7 stades,¹⁰ its height and width are each 8 feet.¹¹ Throughout its length another cutting¹² 20 cubits¹³ deep and 3 feet wide¹⁴ has been dug, through which water flowing through pipes is conveyed to the city from an abundant spring. The architect of this tunnel was the Megarian Eupalinos, son of Naustrophos. This then is one of the three. The second is a breakwater¹⁵ into the sea around the harbour; the length of the breakwater is more than 2 stades, and the sea is 20 fathoms deep. The third of their achievements is the largest of all temples known to us, the first architect of which was Rhoikos, son of Phileus, a local man. Because of these works I have spoken about the Samians at considerable length.

(3.60)

Herodotus gives a full description of the tunnel, as befits its first rank among these three greatest works,¹⁶ and describes the other two works very briefly. It should be noted that by 'works' Herodotus does not just mean engineering works, but works in the broadest sense. Significantly, all the works he specifies are works of engineering. Compare 'the seven wonders of the world', which were also works of engineering.¹⁷

3. THE GREATEST WORK OF THE GREEKS

The tunnel was rediscovered in 1881 by Abbot Kirillos, and was found to be much as Herodotus described it. It is 1,040 m long;¹⁸ it is a square tunnel, variable in height but generally about 1.8 metres high and wide¹⁹ (see Figure 18.1). It was dug in the sixth century BC through the base of Mt Kastro, a 237 m-high mountain. It was dug to bring water from a spring, now called Agiades, on the north side of Kastro, into the city of Samos, now called Pythagorion, on the south side of the mountain (see Figure 18.2).

The water pipes are laid in a cutting along the east wall of the tunnel. The cutting is 3.38 m deep at the north end of the tunnel, but is sloping, so that at the south end of the tunnel it lies 8.5m below the tunnel floor.²⁰ For some of its length the 'cut and cover' method of construction was employed. Here the channel was dug out to its entire depth, roofed, and then the cavity refilled with rubble from the roof of the channel to the floor of the tunnel. Elsewhere the cutting was excavated only to part of its depth and the water channel tunnelled through the rock beneath.²¹ These two types of working can be seen at the many open 'shafts' between the main tunnel and

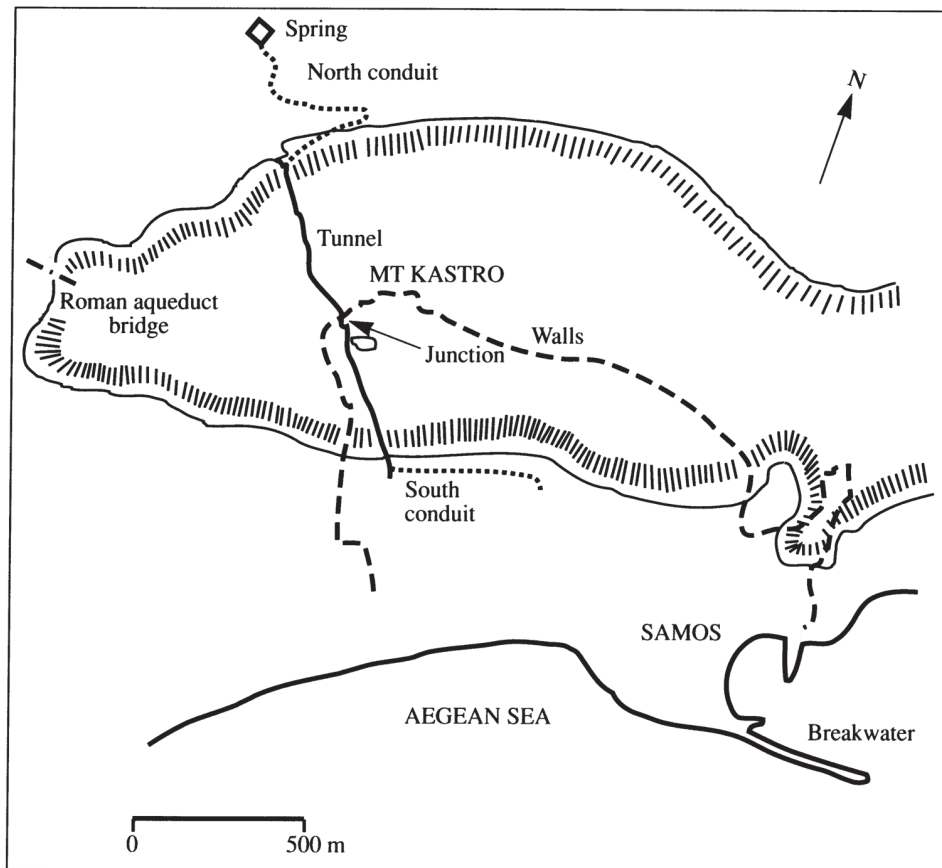


Figure 18.2 The tunnel and environs (after Kienast).

the water tunnel. Some of these ‘shafts’ are several metres long. At the southern end of the tunnel the water channel does not emerge, so to speak, but carries on through a conduit to the city. There is a separate square entrance to the water channel below and south of the main tunnel entrance.

The one piece of significant information which Herodotus fails to give is that the tunnel was dug from both ends and met in the middle. We know that it was dug from both ends because around its mid-point, the tunnel from the south turns to face *north-east* (towards the *right* from the south-tunnellers’ perspective), while the tunnel from the north turns to face *south-east* (towards the *left* from the north-tunnellers’ perspective). The tunnel from the north also rises quickly before the junction, and then overshoots the south tunnel at the junction. This would not have occurred if the tunnel had been dug continuously through from one end to the other.

It has been said²² that had the tunnellers not both deviated towards the east, they would have met head on: they were in perfect alignment. This is not quite true according to the latest survey in Kienast (1990), which asserts that the north tunnel is, at the junction, some 6 m out of alignment to the east. It certainly is not the case

that the tunnels are perfectly straight and true along their lengths between their entrances and the points at which they turn to meet. Indeed, it is all the more remarkable that the two tunnels met, given the bends to be found in both before the final bend which leads to the junction.²³

The steep rise in the original north tunnel floor as it turns towards the junction suggests that the north tunnellers thought they were too low. But by sight it seems that they were on right plane originally, and had they not deviated upwards in the last stretch then they would not have overshoot the south tunnel.

The tunnels meet at an angle of about 80°, and upon meeting the faces of both tunnels were abandoned. The floor of the north tunnel was then dug down to a level about 60 cm above the floor of the south tunnel, presumably to ease passage between the two halves²⁴ (see Figures 18.3 and 18.4).

4. THE PROBLEM OF ALIGNMENT

We do not know by what methods Eupalinos designed his tunnel. Herodotus' reference to Eupalinos and his tunnel is the only specific one which survives in the sources, and Herodotus says nothing on the method of construction.

There are three primary problems which need to be solved by the tunnel-builders:

- (1) where to start digging into the mountain-side;
- (2) how to find the same level for the north and south tunnels so that they will meet on the same plane; and
- (3) how to find the same alignment, so that the two tunnels will meet head on.

4.1 Where to start

Where to start digging at each end will be determined primarily by the purpose of the tunnel. In this case it was to bring water from a spring, on the north of the mountain, inside the city wall, on the south side of the mountain. The water was to flow by gravity, therefore the water channel had to have a slope, but not one too steep, to avoid the water being discharged as a torrent. The water was brought from the spring to the mountainside by a conduit, and since water will not flow uphill, the conduit had to decline between the spring and the tunnel, and the tunnel (where the conduit entered it) had to be a little lower again. So the level of the tunnel was determined at the north end by the level of the conduit, and the level at the south end was determined by the level at the north end.

Given the level, the precise spot at which the diggers began tunnelling into the mountain must have been determined by a number of factors: (i) They would have wanted to make the tunnel as short as possible. Without significantly lengthening the tunnel, at the north end they could have started the tunnel some 100 m before they did, approximately where (because of the terrain) they had to give up the cut-and-cover method previously employed on the conduit, and start tunnelling. However, that would have meant tunnelling under a stream bed—not a good idea when the rock is porous (as limestone is), (ii) They may have had natural ventilation in mind when choosing the location of the tunnel mouth. Exposing the approaches and portals to



Figure 18.3 The junction—the abandoned face of the south tunnel is straight ahead, and the north tunnel joins at left.

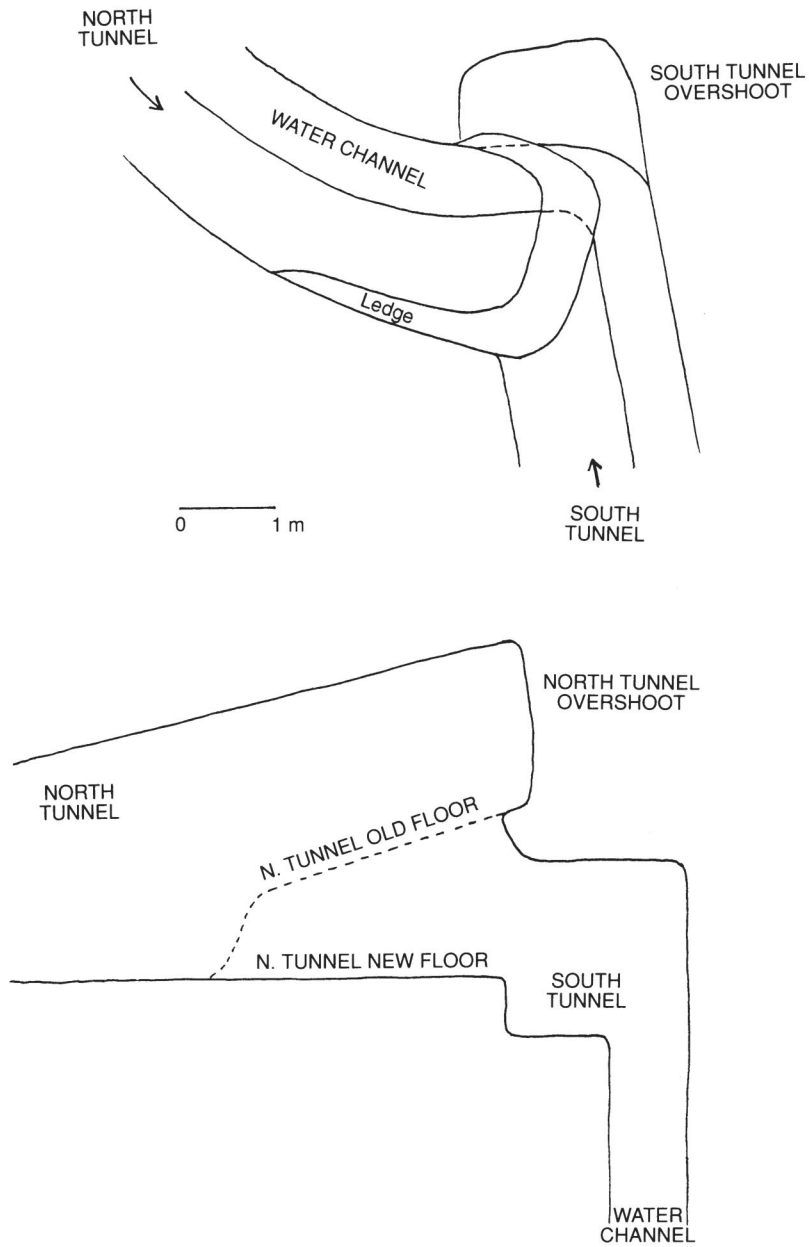


Figure 18.4 The junction in plan (above) and elevation (below).

prevailing winds improves ventilation in the tunnel, and counteracts dampness caused by condensation and water seepage.²⁵ (iii) Goodfield argued that the spot was chosen because it was ‘the only location where it was possible to plant a row of poles as a surveying guide up and over the mountain and keep them in sight all the time’.²⁶ This was later modified to ‘one of the few lines by which one can climb easily and directly up the rugged southern hillside and then down the gentler northern slope to the valley behind’.²⁷ We cannot agree with this. The route is definitely not ‘easy’, especially where a long vertical cliff crosses the line.²⁸ Moreover, many lines over the mountain could probably be found by trial and error. In our opinion, surveying demands had little if anything to do with the location of either of the tunnel mouths.

4.2 Finding the level

Next comes the more difficult question of how to find that level at the south end. Before discussing the possible methods, we should first describe the tools used.

The tools which were used for surveying and sighting are basically three: the groma, the chorobates, and the measuring pole or rod. They were all invented in Egypt before the construction of Eupalinos’ tunnel, and were all still in use in Roman times.

The groma is a horizontal cross, mounted on the point of an offset pole, with plumb lines hanging from each of the four end points.²⁹ It allows one to sight straight lines, and lines at right angles to one another (perpendicular lines).

The second tool is a levelling instrument called the chorobates. It is a bench, preferably about 20 feet long according to Vitruvius (*On Architecture* 8.5.1), with four identical and straight legs attached perpendicularly at each corner, with a crosspiece from the lower part of each leg to some point along the bench. On these crosspieces are drawn vertical lines, and on the bench directly above each line is attached a plumb line. There is also a groove, 5 feet long, down the middle of the bench, which may be filled with water if it is too windy to use the plumb lines properly. The chorobates is level either when the plumb lines hang true in front of the vertical lines on the crosspieces, or when the water is at the rim all around the groove. There were simpler (and smaller) levelling instruments which worked on the same principle, including basic water-levels.

The third tool, the measuring pole or rod, is basically a very large ruler, about 10 cubits long according to Hero (*Dioptra* 5), with a plumb line and a vertical line drawn somewhere on it (to ensure that the rod is vertical when in use), a black and white sighting disk, and a more or less sophisticated mechanism for reading off the measurement.

These then are the tools of the trade, whichever method was used to design Eupalinos’ tunnel.

There seem to be two possibilities for finding the same level at the south end as at the north end.

4.2.1 The poles-over-the-top method

One method is by the use of measuring poles over the mountain, and a lot of very basic arithmetic (i.e. additions) to measure the height up one side of the mountain and down the other. Starting at the north end where they wanted to dig the tunnel mouth,

the surveyors stuck a measuring pole in the ground. Then they set off up the mountain, preferably (but not necessarily) in a straight line, and preferably (but not necessarily) along the straight line they wanted the tunnel to go, sticking in measuring poles as often as was needed to ensure that they could sight horizontally from the top part of one pole to the bottom part of another. When they got to the top, they stuck a pole in at the highest point. They added up all the height readings taken from pole to pole up the north side, and got a figure b , which was the height from the tunnel mouth to the top of the mountain. They then repeated the process coming down the other side, reading off the measurements and adding them together until they got to the same figure b . That was the same level as the north end of the tunnel, and was the level at which the south entrance should be dug to give a horizontal tunnel.

Given the slope of the mountain and cliffs along the route of the tunnel, in our opinion scaffolding would have been necessary if the poles followed the projected line of the tunnel. Scaffolding would have been readily available nearby if the tunnel was being constructed at the same time as the fortifications, which enclose the top of the west end of the mountain and run down to the sea, on the south, crossing the line of the south tunnel (recall Figure 18.2). However, this method to find the level does not demand that the poles follow the line of the tunnel; all one needs to know is the height up and down the mountain, and a zig-zag approach is as good as (and a lot easier than) a direct line.

4.2.2 The poles-round-the-mountain method

The other method of finding the level at the south end is to go round the mountain from the north end, preferably (but not necessarily) on the level. As with the poles-over-the-top method, the difficult way would be to try to walk around the western end of the mountain on the contour-line of the north entrance; the easy way would be to go down to the stream bed to the west nearby, measuring the drop as one went down, and then measure up the hill on the other side. The relatively difficult contour-level route would again almost certainly require scaffolding; the easy route would not.³⁰ Of course the topography may have changed considerably over 2,500 years. Erosion has certainly occurred; the first couple of streets in from the harbour of Pythagorion are sitting on the silted up part of the harbour of Samos³¹—silt which presumably was soil on the south eastern slopes of Mt Kastro in Eupalinos' time.

4.3 Finding the alignment

The problem of alignment is, first, how to know in which direction to start digging, and second, how to know in which direction to dig once one is inside the mountain.³² Finding the alignment inside the mountain is an important practical consideration, since the entrances at both ends of the tunnel are *not* on the tunnel alignment, but veer west of it.

4.3.1 Over or around the mountain

If the poles-over-the-top method was used for finding the level, *and* if the poles

were set on a straight line *and* on the projected line of the tunnel, then the alignment over the mountain would already have been evident, and the problem would have been to know that alignment once the tunnellers were inside the mountain and unable to see the line of poles pointing the direction. If this particular method was used to find the level, one cannot help wondering why they did not dig into the hillside on that line, but at both ends moved several paces west and dug in at an angle such as to meet up with that line some 7 m inside the hill (at the north end) and 15m inside the hill (at the south end).

If the poles-round-the-mountain method was used to find the level, then how could the tunnellers know in which direction to dig at the start of the tunnels, as well as once they were inside the mountain? There is a solution to the first of these problems in Hero's *Dioptra*. This treatise describes the construction and use of a sophisticated sighting instrument Hero invented. One of the examples he gives to show how the dioptra would improve performance in surveying concerns the problem of digging a tunnel from both ends (chapter 15).³³ Note that the method employed in this example could be followed with any sighting equipment: it does not presuppose use of the dioptra.³⁴

With reference to Figure 18.5, the method described by Hero works as follows. Given a mountain ABCD and located points A and B for the tunnel mouth on both sides, sight around the mountain from one point to the other by a series of perpendicular lines, say AE, EF, FG, GH, HI, IJ, and JB in Figure 18.5. A right-angled triangle can be projected through the mountain, with its hypotenuse marking the line of the tunnel. The length of the other two sides AK and KB of the triangle can be

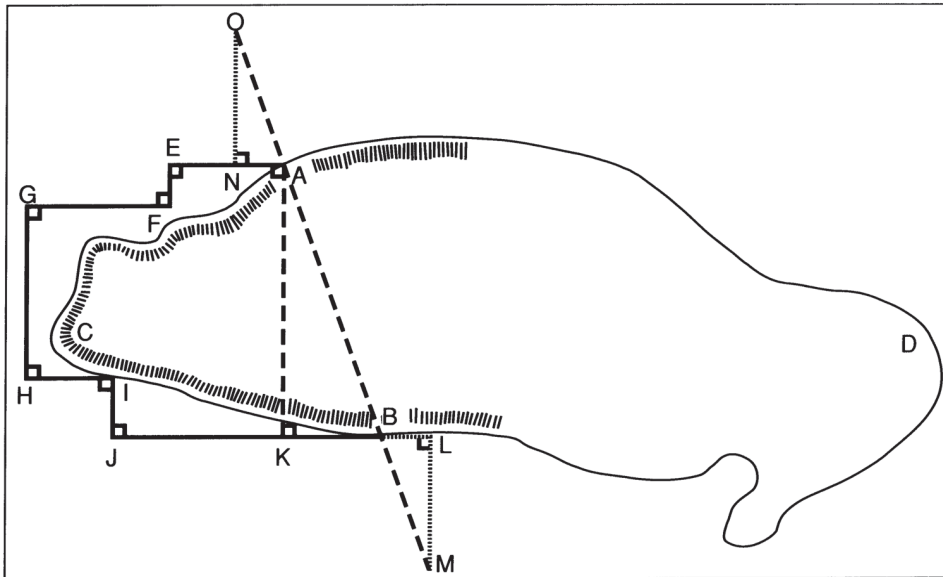


Figure 18.5 Hero's method for finding the alignment.

calculated from the length of the sighting lines round the mountain, and their ratios found:

$$AK=EF+GH+IJ.$$

$$KB=(HI+JB)-(AE+FG).$$

Now that we have the ratios of the sides of the triangle, smaller similar triangles (i.e. triangles with identical angles) AON and BML can be constructed at the points of entry, and their hypotenuses will show the projected line of the tunnel, and thus show the direction in which to dig. If this method was used by Eupalinos, then neither of the distances AK and KB, which must be determined by addition and subtraction, should be more than 1000 m.³⁵

There has been some debate over which method Eupalinos used. In 1903 Schmidt suggested Hero's method had been used; van der Waerden (1954), Burns (1971) and others have followed this suggestion. Kastenbein (1960) suggested that the easiest method would be use of poles and a survey to find the base level, without making any mention of Hero's method. Kastenbein may not then have known of Hero's method. Six years later he wrote again on the subject, and said that Hero's method was feasible and that it was impossible to decide which had been used (1966).

Meanwhile Goodfield (1964) had denied that Hero's method was used, and suggested that all that was required was the poles-over-the-top-in-a-straight-line method. Kienast (1990) does not mention Hero's method, assuming that a very detailed survey was undertaken, and that the poles-over-the-top-in-a-straight-line method was employed. Further, he adapts the poles-over-the-top method to give an account of the angular deviation in the north tunnel.³⁶ He does not mention that both entrances are off the alignment of the tunnel, nor explain how this misalignment—which is inconvenient for his proposed method³⁷—was overcome.

Neither method solves the problem of finding and holding the alignment once inside the mountain. If the entrances were aligned and if the tunnel was straight this would be less of a problem, but the entrances are not aligned and the tunnel is not straight: there are some serious wiggles through the tunnel's course in both sections, but particularly in the north.

The non-aligned entrances are problematic, and have not to date received the attention they deserve: we give here our own observations on them.

4.3.2 *The entrances*

Both south and north entrances to the tunnel descend steeply, starting from a point slightly west of the tunnel alignment (see Figures 18.6 and 18.7). The south portal staircase is 58 cm wide and 2.28 m long, with a 3.25 m drop. The bottom of the staircase leads to a long built section (called an adit) of dog-leg shape, which has a strongly gabled roof. The first leg (6 m long) has a slight decline, and the second leg (7 m long) has a slight incline, which brings it back up to the tunnel level. The third and last section of the south entrance (6.4 m long), which is perfectly on the tunnel alignment, has a 80 cm² square, stone-lined vertical shaft about mid-point. The shaft was constructed and dressed carefully. See Figure 18.6.

Beneath this adit, the south conduit continues south on the line of the tunnel. Its

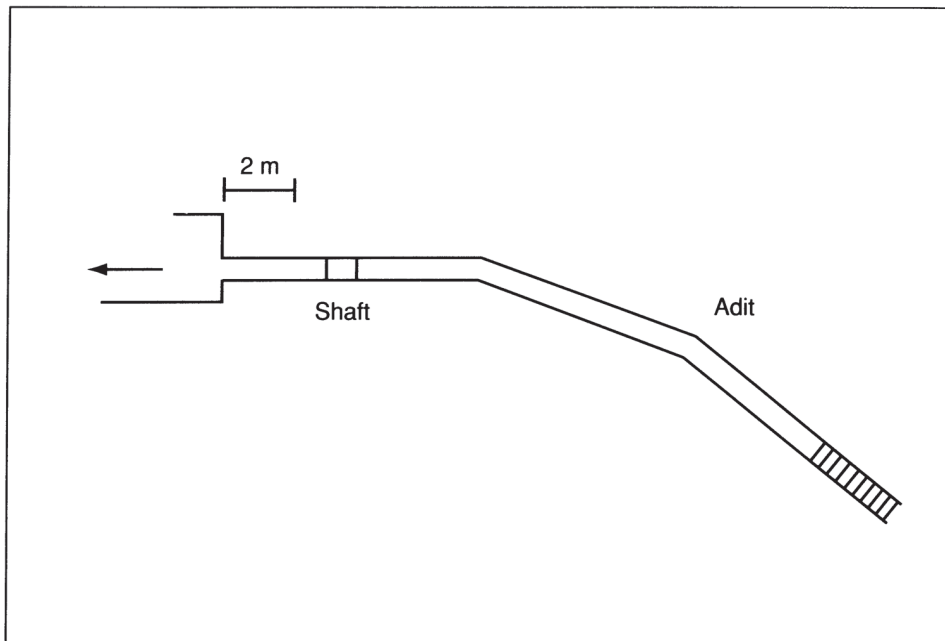


Figure 18.6 South entrance.

own access entrance (the second lower entrance at the south end) is also on the line of the tunnel, about 25 m to the south of the main entrance.

The portal at the north end lies rather more sharply west of the line of the tunnel, and is much more simple in design. The slightly curving staircase, which is 1.15 m wide narrowing to 58 cm at the bottom, and 7.1 m long, descends to the correct level. The bottom of the north staircase opens directly onto the tunnel proper, which is lined on the left, only 90 cm wide in this part, and goes off to the right at an angle of approximately 30°. See Figure 18.7.

The north conduit enters the east wall of the north tunnel 9.5 m from the bottom of the staircase. It enters from the east at an angle of approximately 80°, in a rectangular recess about 1.2 m deep and 3.3 m wide. There is a huge drop (about 9 m) between the ceiling and the floor of the conduit in this section, adjoining the tunnel. The (later) lined section starts 3 m further in.³⁸

We assume that Eupalinos' tunnellers knew where they wanted to go into the mountain; at what precise spot (in three dimensions) they would need to start digging at both ends. Digging horizontally into a sloping hillside may have risked roof collapse at the mouth of the tunnel, since the ceiling was unsupported, or slope slide,³⁹ since there appears to have been no portal headwall to retain the earth behind. Either in the planning or by trial and error, Eupalinos or the tunnellers would have realized that the entrance should (ideally) be dug at about a 90° angle to the hillside, so that the roof had as much support from the surrounding rock as was possible, and the surrounding rock and earth were disturbed as little as possible. Both entrances

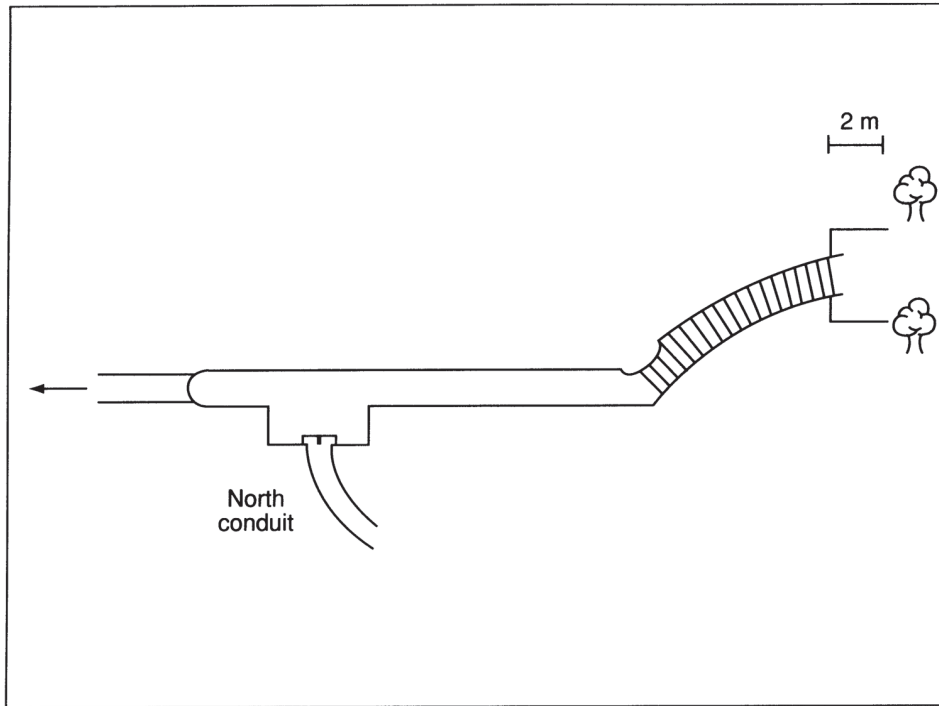


Figure 18.7 North entrance.

have a sharp incline (about 55° from the horizontal at the south entrance), with steep steps down. Both are relatively narrow and lined by stone walls.

However the tunnellers found the correct alignment once inside the mountain, they set off and dug through the mountain holding their line and their level remarkably well in the circumstances.

*4.3.3 The junction*⁴⁰

In due course they approached each other. Both gangs turned about 40° towards the east—the north crew turned first west,⁴¹ then swung round east, producing a scythe-shaped bend. They seem to have realized that they could easily pass each other in the rock if they were running parallel instead of head-on; if they both turned toward the same direction, so long as they were in the same horizontal plane, sooner or later they were guaranteed to cross paths, and meet. The north tunnellers, besides originally turning west rather than east, also started heading upwards; they seem to have thought (mistakenly as it turns out) that they were too low. To give some idea of the sort of time and distance involved here, given an estimated 5–10 years to dig the tunnel and a uniform rate of progress, they were still some way apart when they began the final, and crucial, section: it could have taken about 3 to 6 months to dig from the points where they each start their final bend to the meeting point.⁴²

Clearly, they thought they knew where they were relative to the tunnel projection:

they knew how long the whole tunnel was supposed to be, and how far each team had dug. To know the total planned length, they must have been able to measure or calculate it from the distance over or around the mountain. To know how far each team had dug they could, of course, measure from entrance to face.

4.3.4 *Measurement and computation*

What measurements and calculations were involved in digging the tunnel, and how were they performed? What geometrical knowledge was needed or available on Samos in the sixth century BC?

Finding and holding the alignment is more complicated than finding and holding the level, especially if Hero's method was used. In the additions and subtractions of measurements, the numbers were not small (although this depends upon the units chosen). Distances of the order of 1,000 metres are not excessively large in units of stades, plethra, fathoms, cubits or feet, and we must assume that manipulation of such numbers was within their capabilities.

The estimation of the length of the tunnel was an essential calculation. If the alignment was established using the poles-over-the-top-in-a-straight-line method, then the length of the tunnel could be computed by adding together the horizontal distances between the poles.

If it was performed using the data obtained from Hero's method then the calculation would increase in complexity. To Hero in the first century AD, the length AB (see Figure 18.5) was easy to determine using Pythagoras' theorem (proposition 47 in Euclid *Elements* Book I): $AB^2 = (AK)^2 + (KB)^2$. This calculation increases the size of the numbers, and the solution involves square roots (for which good approximation methods were known to Hero). To illustrate Hero's method applied to Eupalinos' tunnel, suppose $AK = 950$ m, and $KB = 360$ m, then $AB = 1016$ m. However, we need not assume that Pythagoras' theorem was used to compute the length of the tunnel. To calculate AB it is possible to transform ABK to a smaller triangle A'B'K', whose two sides containing the right angle are say $1/100^{\text{th}}$ of the corresponding sides of ABK, and obtain A'B' from measuring an exact drawing of A'B'K', from which $AB = 100 \times A'B'$. This geometric rule of thumb falls short of Pythagoras' theorem (but it is an easy corollary of it).

There must have been considerable geometrical activity in sixth-century Samos,⁴³ required by the immense building projects. Few traces of this activity and the people involved can be found in literary sources. However, Theodoros, a younger contemporary of Rhoikos, is credited with the invention of the carpenter's square.⁴⁴ The simplest carpenter's square is a small wooden right-angled triangle, in which the piece forming the hypotenuse is attached to the other two sides at equal distances from the corner. Pythagoras was born into and grew up within this environment, though his dates, like those of Rhoikos and Theodoros, are uncertain. We conjecture that the building projects had greater influence on Pythagoras than Pythagoras had on the building works. Eupalinos did not need mathematical training by Pythagoras (or anyone else on Samos); he was the expert brought in from Megara to construct the tunnel.

To establish the geometrical basis of Greek engineering is an important task. We

believe that it may reveal that the origins of Greek mathematics lie in Greek engineering (rather than in the trance-like contemplation of truth and beauty).⁴⁵

4.3.5 *The north tunnel*

At the junction the cut down floor of the north tunnel is 58 cm higher than the floor of the south tunnel. The north tunnel seems to have a slight incline through the scythe-shaped bend, perhaps caused by the levelling operation after the two tunnels had met. If we understand Kienast (1990) correctly, in the central section of the north tunnel,⁴⁶ after an approximately 30 m straight line section, the tunnel veers to the west, and then to the east, coming back on alignment about 200 m from the north entrance.

From the north entrance, for most of the first two hundred metres, the tunnel is quite claustrophobic (see Figure 18.8), being narrow (only 62 cm wide at most points), lined, gabled, low (less than 1.6 m to the top of the gable), the floor irregularly punctuated by a shaft to the water channel running directly beneath, and consists of a series of straight sections at slight angles to one another, of the kind found in the south adit. It is, however, reasonably level. After about 185 m the tunnel opens out, no longer being narrowed by lining, the water channel reverts to the east wall, and the floor begins to rise gently. According to Kienast the tunnellers were forced to rise to try to overcome water seeping into the tunnel about 200 m in from the north end. It seems that the tunnel was intended to be horizontal. Also according to Kienast the first section of the north tunnel is straight and is on alignment, which may be true in theory and in the survey results (allowing the lined passage to roam over the full normal width of the tunnel, rather than following the central line), but runs contrary to the experience of being in this section of the tunnel, where it is impossible to see beyond one straight stretch at a time because of the angles between each stretch and the narrowness of the passage.

4.3.6 *The time scale*

The tools for digging were a hammer, chisel, lamp, and (probably leather) bucket. How effective were they? What rate of progress did the tunnellers achieve? We can estimate this as follows. The meeting point is not in the middle of the tunnel, but is 620 m from the north entrance and 420 m from the south. Suppose that both teams of tunnellers dug simultaneously, at an equal rate of progress, and that work went on every day of the year.⁴⁷ Further suppose that the digging ended when they met, so that the time it took to build the tunnel was the time it took to build the longest 'half' (i.e. the north tunnel).

If we assume that the tunnel took 5 years to complete,⁴⁸ then the dig rate would have been 34 cm per day.⁴⁹ If it took ten years to complete, then the progress rate would have been 17 cm per day.⁵⁰ At the same rates of digging, the south (shorter) tunnel would have taken 3.4 or 6.7 years respectively. Thus the north tunnel could have been started approximately 1.6 years⁵¹ or 3.3 years⁵² before the south, and would have progressed about 200 m⁵³ before the south tunnel was begun. We suggest that this is what happened: that the tunnel was started in the north quite

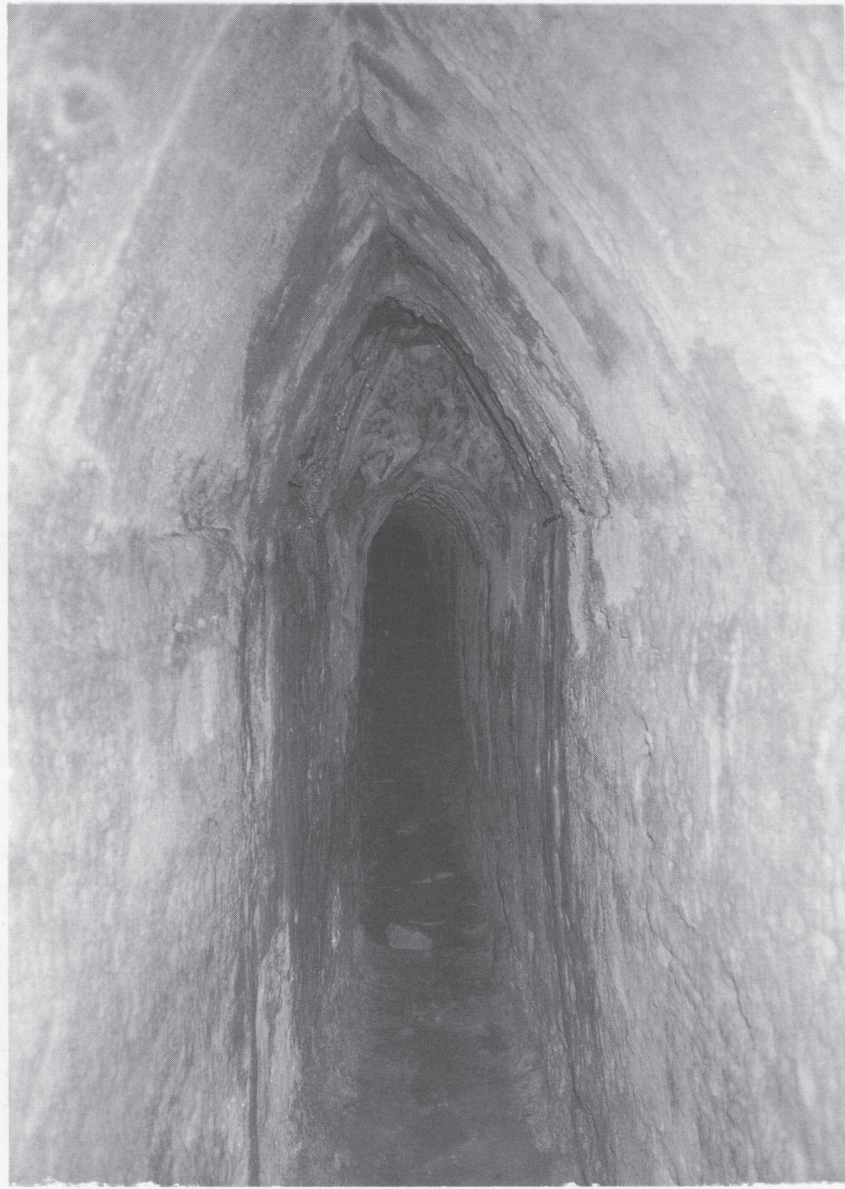


Figure 18.8 The north tunnel (lined section).

some time before work began at the south end. We suggest further that the tunnel was originally planned to be dug straight through in one direction, from north to south. Under the assumption that Eupalinos knew the length of his projected tunnel, he could estimate the time it would take to complete. If the tunnellers were digging at the nominal rates given above, at an early stage in the digging of the north tunnel Eupalinos could estimate the time of arrival at the south end. For example, suppose that they reviewed their position after one year. At the faster rate they could have dug 124 m;⁵⁴ at the slower rate, 62 m. That would give an estimated time of arrival at the south end in a further 7.5, or 15.5, years respectively.⁵⁵ These calculations are speculative, because we do not know the digging rate; but Eupalinos *did* know it, and he could have calculated an estimated completion date.

4.3.7 The shaft

The shaft connecting the tunnel to the surface at the south end is a unique feature in the tunnel (though such shafts are seen over the conduits at both ends). Goodfield suggested that alignment within the tunnel was achieved by using the light coming in from the shaft behind as a leading light: if it was straight behind, the tunnellers were on target. There is a problem with this reasonable idea for holding the alignment: it fails to explain how the north tunnellers held their alignment, for there is no shaft at the north end.⁵⁶ However, if there was not originally any plan to meet up with a tunnel coming from the south, there was no tremendous pressure on the (north, and in the beginning the only) tunnellers to hold very precisely to a certain line. If, as we suppose, the south tunnel was planned and started later, only *then* did it become essential that both tunnels stuck to a planned course. The north tunnel was already well on its way—about 200 m is a reasonable estimate (see above 4.3.6). The south tunnel was not yet begun. Tough engineering demands (finding and holding the level as well as finding and holding the alignment) were placed on the south tunnel, from the first strike of the chisel to the last. The same demands were placed on the north tunnel from this point.⁵⁷ The exact position (in three dimensions) of the north tunnel face had to be established, and any changes in current alignment required to meet up with the south tunnel calculated.

Meanwhile, at the south end, the shaft was dug exactly on the line of the tunnel, and to the required depth. The shaft was carefully lined with stone, square with the line of the tunnel. The section of the tunnel either side of the shaft for about 3 m was also lined with dressed stone. By ensuring that the shaft was square and on line, and that the built section fore and aft was square with the shaft, did they use the light from the shaft and the 'mini tunnel' of the built section to dig straight ahead by looking behind? By lining the tunnel around the shaft, they narrowed its width, and thus the beam of light from the shaft was more central and sharp. The gable roof emphasizes both (see Figure 18.9).

We suggest that the south end only has a shaft because it was started later; the original plan was to dig through from the north. The south end had to follow the alignment from the word 'go!'.

4.3.8 *The water channel*

The tunnel's function was to transport water. To transport water by gravity, a sloping tunnel was required. This was the purpose of the water channel/tunnel dug along the east wall of the tunnel. This double tunnel construction is found in other underground conduit systems, for example those of Syracuse, Akragas and Athens.⁵⁸ This method of construction was probably employed because it was extremely difficult with the tools of the time to hold a constant shallow slope, whereas there were adequate tools to hold the horizontal. The most important part of the job in Samos was ensuring that the tunnels met under Kastro; once connected, the required sloping channel could be cut by incremental increases in the depth over certain units of distance, or by sinking shafts of increasing depth and connecting them by trial and error. The actual gradient is 0.5 per cent. The lower channel would also serve as a drain for water seeping into the tunnel.

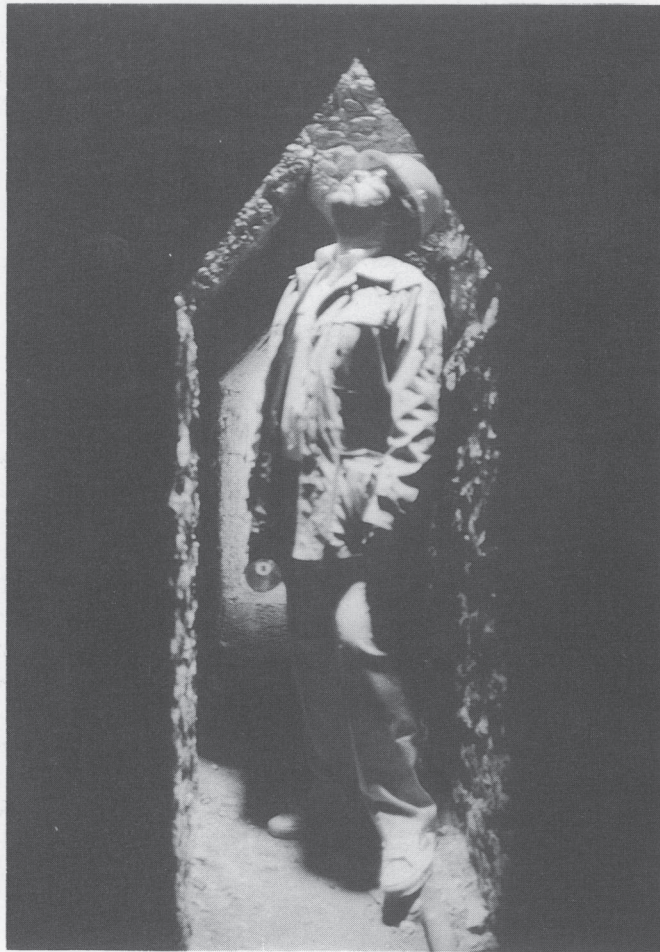


Figure 18.9 The shaft.

5. THE SOCIAL CONTEXT

5.1 Introduction

Samos must have looked like a building site for a large part of the sixth century BC. Quite apart from any civil or domestic building going on in the city, the breakwater was being built about 400 m out into the sea; city walls, about 6.4 km long, 6 m high, and 2 m wide, were being constructed with carefully dressed stones (some of them huge; see Figure 18.10); 31 towers were being constructed, even more carefully and to greater height, along its length (see Figure 18.11); a moat was being dug⁵⁹ immediately outside the city wall on the coastal plain to the west of the city; the tunnel was being dug through the mountain; and the south conduit was being tunnelled through from the south entrance of the tunnel to the distribution point in the north-west quarter of the city. Round the far side of Kastro, the spring was being contained in a covered, waterproofed reservoir, and the north conduit cut and covered from the reservoir to the north tunnel. And further west along the coastal plain, at the Heraion, 'the largest known temple in the world' was being constructed. Cranes, hoists, scaffolding, wagons carrying building stone and excavated material, and above all, men at work on these projects, would have been conspicuous to all who lived or worked in Samos at the time. One should try to imagine the buzz of activity on these spectacular projects, and the atmosphere which it would have created.

The question of means and motives must be asked of any building operation. How and why were the Samians able and willing to undertake these outstanding projects?

5.2 Resources

Resources required for these projects are of two main types: labour and materials. Skilled labour—highly skilled labour—was required for the planning, surveying, and supervision of the water system, fortifications, and breakwater. It is necessary to emphasize that skilled does not mean infallible. There is a tendency in historical study to assume that everything done was intended to be exactly as it turned out to be. That assumption is contrary to experience, and is occasionally proved to be false. To cite a proven case of an error in tunnelling, Nonius Datus (C2 AD) was responsible for the construction near Saldæ (Numidia) of a tunnel half the length of the one in Samos. He later erected a stone pillar, about 2 m high and 50 cm square, to explain to the world why the two halves of his tunnel had failed to meet and needed remedial action: it was, he insists, not *his* fault, but the tunnellers', who had not followed his drawings. Both gangs had veered to their right, and in consequence they had passed each other in the rock.

In the case of the Samian water system we know, thanks to Herodotus, that the islanders bought in the requisite expertise in the person of Eupalinos, who came from Megara.⁶⁰ We do not know who had overall responsibility for the fortifications and breakwater. The Heraion was designed and supervised by two local men, Rhoikos and Theodoros.

Tunnellers hewed rock in a confined space, in almost total blackness, in poor air, and in considerable danger.⁶¹ Plasterers made waterproof cement and sealed the



Figure 18.10 Samos fortifications.



Figure 18.11 One of the towers. The breakwater can be seen to the right.

reservoir.⁶² Stoneworkers quarried, cut, and fitted the stones for walls, towers, breakwater, tunnel entrances, and lining of part of the north tunnel where roof falls were threatening or had occurred. Joiners made and repaired scaffolding, cranes, and heavy wagons. Crane-men hoisted and lowered stones into position. Timber-merchants acquired and supplied timber of various woods and sizes as needed. Rope-makers made and repaired heavy ropes. Potters made thousands of interlocking water pipes. Labourers assisted by fetching, carrying, and holding materials as required.

The Samians could not have recruited all these people, especially the skilled and semi-skilled specialists, from among their own ranks. Normal levels of activity could support only a very small number of specialist craftsmen in a given community.⁶³ A major building project posed skilled labour demands which outstripped local supply, even in the case of one moderately sized temple.⁶⁴ We can only guess the numbers of men and proportion of foreign craftsmen involved in these projects on Samos, but estimates of numbers and diversity should be related to the supposed speed and synchronism of the works.

There may have been Lakonian craftsmen involved on the projects. There is literary and archaeological evidence to suggest that some form of 'special relationship' existed between Samos and Sparta from the late seventh century, if not before.⁶⁵ In particular, a high proportion of all Lakonian decorated vases made between 580 and 550 found outside Lakonia are found on Samos, which finds *may* be the fruits of plundering activities, but the same cannot be said of a bronze lion which was dedicated to Hera at the Samian Heraion by one Eumnastos the Spartiate, c. 550. This 'special relationship' might have encouraged Lakonian craftsmen to work on Samos, especially if the relationship was based not just on ties of *xenia* between individuals and mutual rendering of military services in the past, but there existed *symbolai*, or interstate agreements, which gave members of one state some protection when in the other.⁶⁶

If we turn from men to materials, the one-kilometre tunnel required approximately 3,370 m³ of excavated material to be removed and dumped elsewhere (this figure excludes the water channel and conduits). This is *minute* in comparison with the quantity of stone and rock required for building about 6.4 kilometres of walls and 31 towers. About 2.5 km of clay water pipe had to be made. Inestimable quantities and variable qualities of timber, glue, rope, lime, and plaster were consumed in the construction work. We do not know how much money was required to pay the workmen, or even that they were paid.⁶⁷ Costing out such a project is difficult because of the lack of information in the sources. At Epidauros in the fourth century, excavation costs for channels for the water supply varied from 1 dr. 1 obol to 2 dr. 3 obols per foot.⁶⁸ Such figures, even when given for stated units of measure rather than for the whole contract, do not help us cost even the water channel within the tunnel. We do not know, for example, whether variations in price reflect difficulties experienced in different sections, or different times taken to complete the work, or something else. Even if we knew in detail the relevant costings for the temple-works at Epidauros, we could not apply them to Eupalinos' tunnel, because excavating topsoil and bedrock in the open is altogether different from excavating unweathered rock in a tunnel.

The resources consumed by these projects in Samos were vast, by any standards. Even allowing for the use of slave labour, local stone, local earths, local timber, local

hemph, and so on, these projects represent a huge cost in terms of time and effort to acquire and exploit labour and materials, to say nothing of opportunity costs (i.e. the value of alternative work which the labour force might otherwise have done, and alternative use of the materials consumed).

5.3 Motives⁶⁹

The fortifications were not built in a hurry. The high standard of building and finishing of the stone suggests that their construction was precautionary, rather than as a reaction to some concrete and more or less immediate threat. Samos was acquiring plenty of enemies through her piracy and plundering. It is indicative that Herodotus' entire excursus on Samos (3.39–60) concerns or revolves around Samian plundering activities.⁷⁰ The name of the first tyrant of Samos, Syloson, means 'booty-securing'. Its choice as a name or nickname suggests a certain level of achievement in this field, either by himself or his father, and a readiness to boast about it publicly. A co-operative of privateers, in Miller's phrase,⁷¹ graduated into a very powerful fleet under orders. Also, from the middle of the sixth century, there was the growing (but usually distant) threat of a major power attacking—Lydia, Persia, or even Egypt.

The planning of the tunnel presupposes the planning of the walls. The spring is outside the walls, so something had to be done to bring its water inside the walls in case the city was besieged. The tunnel does not appear to have been dug in a hurry. The sides, top, and floor of the tunnel are cut neatly and squarely. Why did they tunnel through the mountain rather than run a conduit around it? The north conduit is long anyway (890 m), so arguments about security are weak: enemies only need to find one shaft to cut off or poison the water. Compare Roman aqueducts: most aqueducts were built underground for 90 per cent of their length,⁷² but the Romans also built sections on arches, which were (very obvious) vulnerable points. The argument about security is further weakened by the fact that elsewhere in Greece systems constructed entirely within the walls of a city are constructed in the same manner to the same standards.⁷³

The answer to the question 'why did they go through the mountain rather than round it?' lies perhaps in the fact that tunnelling is tunnelling, whether one is digging 3 or 300 m below ground. If not using the shaft method of construction, it makes little difference in practice how deep the tunnel is (given the parameters of tunnel construction in antiquity). The topography at the west end of Mount Kastro made the cut-and-cover method employed for the first 700 m of the conduit unworkable, forcing the diggers to tunnel thereafter. And if one is tunnelling, the shortest route is preferable.

Why then did they dig such a large tunnel for the alleged purpose? The answer to this is perhaps that its internal dimensions would allow work on the 'real' job of digging the water channel to proceed more easily.

Why did they dig from both ends when they could have dug from one end? The obvious answer to this question is to complete the job more quickly. Working from both ends allows the job to be done in less time, since twice as many people can work on the tunnel at the same time. The dimensions of the tunnel suggest that four men could have been employed on each face at any time: two on the heading (the top half of the tunnel), digging in advance of two more on the bench (the bottom

half). We have suggested above (p. 418) that the south tunnel was started later than the north tunnel because completion was desired or needed earlier than the estimated time of arrival of the tunnel from the north end—perhaps because the walls were nearing completion, or because an external threat was anticipated or appearing.

The breakwater gave protection to the harbour, and the ships within it, from the prevailing southerly winds. By the last quarter of the sixth century the Samian navy was one of the most powerful navies, if not *the* most powerful Greek navy, in the Aegean. Comprising about 100 pentekonteres, plus triremes and 'Samians' (which design combined some of the features of a merchantman with a warship), and having a crucial role to play in the Samians' generation of income and influence as well as in their defence, the fleet needed a safe port.

5.4 The place of engineering in society

Thanks to the success of later Greek science and philosophy, and the prejudice of some ancient and many modern commentators, we are led to believe that the Greeks valued pure science and disdained applied science; that the Greek intellectual lived in a chryselephantine tower, pondering pure idealized forms, and shunning, if not actually snubbing, the real world and the real people who dwelt in it. As we have seen, Herodotus did not share this view. Apart from Eupalinos, see also (for example) his story of the sixth-century Samian engineer Mandrokles, who bridged the Bosphorus for Darius (4.85–9). Likewise, Thucydides records (for example) the Corinthians' contribution to ship design and the name of Ameinokles, the Corinthian shipwright who designed the 'Samian' ship (1.13).

Many centuries later in the Hellenistic period (the 'golden age' of Greek science) Arkhimedes became famous in his lifetime for his marvellous physical discoveries and mechanical inventions:⁷⁴ the bath story, which concerned the real-world problem of a fraudulent goldsmith; the water screw, which concerned the real-world problem of water lifting; and the anti-siege devices, which concerned the real-world problem of Roman soldiers at the gates of the city.

However, Plutarch, writing many more centuries later, asks us (in a much quoted passage) to believe that 'although [Arkhimedes'] inventions had earned him a reputation for almost superhuman intellectual power, he would not deign to leave behind him any writings on his mechanical discoveries. He regarded the business of engineering, and indeed of every art which ministers to the material needs of life, as an ignoble and sordid activity, and he concentrated his ambition exclusively upon those speculations whose beauty and subtlety are untainted by the claims of necessity.'⁷⁵ That records Plutarch's view of engineering, not Arkhimedes'. Plutarch is also wrong: Arkhimedes 'deigned' to write a work *On sphere-making* (which is lost), and *The Method* (which was rediscovered in 1906). Arkhimedes developed some of his mathematics using a mechanical method, based on the lever principle, by which he could discover mathematical results, which he then set about proving.⁷⁶ Moreover, it is highly significant that Arkhimedes wrote about his method. As Sarton pointed out, few scientists explain their method of discovery, because the first intuition may be vague, difficult to express in scientific terms, perhaps unsubstantiated by theory, and certainly difficult and tedious so to substantiate.⁷⁷

Geometry was not an élitist game, known only to the wealthy and educated few and practised by them for sport. It was used by engineers, architects, shipbuilders, housebuilders, and numerous other people. Vitruvius argues that Pythagoras of Samos, Aristotle of Stageira, Plato of Athens, Arkhimedes of Syracuse, Arkhytas of Taras, Eratosthenes of Cyrene, and Demokritos (of Kroton?) deserve honours at least as great as those awarded to athletes because their researches ‘are an everlasting possession, not only for the improvement of character but also for general *utility*’ (our italics). Moreover, athletes cannot ‘*do for human life* what is done by the researches of the learned’.⁷⁸

Similar sentiments are expressed by Plutarch’s contemporary Pliny the Elder, who, after discussing sculpture, painting, polished marble structures, obelisks (Egyptian and Roman), the pyramids, the Sphinx, Pharos lighthouse, labyrinths, temples, sewers, palaces, and theatres, says ‘Let us now move on to achievements which are unsurpassed *because of their real value*’, by which he introduces the subject of aqueducts and water supply.⁷⁹

6. CONCLUSION

Confronted by the tunnel, the primary question is: how was it constructed? As we have seen, this leads to many separate technical questions, some of which have no answer at the present time. The analysis of the tunnel is heavily dependent on the comprehensiveness and accuracy of surveys and their publication.

We have tried to show how study of engineering projects such as that of Eupalinos’ tunnel influences and can improve our understanding of Greek history (most obviously political, social, and economic issues). It gives insights into the needs, ambitions and abilities of the society which commissioned, built, and used the engineered object or system. Much remains to be discovered, clarified, and confirmed to enrich the picture of the world of Eupalinos of Megara and the tunnel he built on Samos. The same is true of all parts of the Greek world. Behind every good temple is a good engineer. At present, engineering is the barely excavated foundation for the glory that was Greece.

NOTES

- 1 The hekatompedon, built soon after 800. The Rhoikos temple, the first of the great Ionian temples, was built c. 570–60.
- 2 General development of the sanctuary of Hera through the century culminated in the building of a treasury c. 700.
- 3 The Samian adventurer Kolaïos discovered Tartessos (near Gadiz, on the Atlantic coast of Spain) c. 640. The poet Semonides led a Samian ‘colonizing’ venture to Amorgos, by which place he is usually known, c. 610. Samos-in-the-Nile was the Samians’ base in Egypt before Amasis concentrated Greek ‘trade’ at Naukratis.
- 4 Syloson assumed power c. 590.
- 5 See Herodotus 3.39; Thucydides 1.13.
- 6 See Herodotus 3.54: the siege of 525 suggests that the walls at least were completed by that time.

- 7 Called Mt Ampelos in Herodotus' time.
- 8 ὄρυγμα ἀμφίστομον.
- 9 πεντήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν ὀργυιάς. An *orguia* is the distance between the fingertips of a person with arms outstretched sideways, roughly equivalent to 6 feet and thus roughly equivalent to a fathom. We do not know which of several standards (if any) Herodotus was using, thus we cannot assess his accuracy. Standard measurements developed slowly and, like calendars and coin systems, could vary from *polis* to *polis*. For example, an *orguia* on the Attic standard foot is equal to 1.8 m; on the Olympian standard foot, it is 1.92 m. See e.g. Richardson (1985) 29–30. However, Herodotus' figures are highly likely to be his personal estimates, not measurements taken by him or the record of someone else's measurements.
- 10 One stade=600 feet.
- 11 This is a literal translation of the Greek, and not the British Imperial measure. All references to feet in this chapter are translations of Greek πούς or Latin *pes*.
- 12 ὄρυγμα.
- 13 εἰκοσίπηχυς; 1 cubit=the distance from elbow to fingertip.
- 14 τρίπουν τὸ εὖρος.
- 15 χῶμα.
- 16 τρία μέγιστα ἐξεργασμένα.
- 17 The list, compiled in Hellenistic times, is: the pyramids of Egypt, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the temple of Artemis at Ephesus (built in a bog), the Mausoleum at Halikarnassos, the statue of Zeus at Olympia, the Colossus of Rhodes, and Pharos lighthouse near Alexandria.
- 18 Kienast (1990) 41. On Herodotus' accuracy in measurements, see n. 9 above.
- 19 Occasionally it is higher than this, more often it is lower. The minimum from our sample of measurements was 1.47 m, and the maximum height, which occurs in the north tunnel at the junction with the south tunnel, we estimated at 3.5 m.
- 20 Hence the gradient is approximately 1 in 200, or 0.5 per cent.
- 21 See Kienast (1990) 41 and figure 4. However, it is not obvious to us that the failure to dig the channel down to depth was 'to save on labour and facilitate work'. On the contrary, it seems to us that digging the ditch to about 3.5 m *and* tunnelling through the bedrock several metres below the ditch represents a waste of labour, perhaps indicating an error in the ditch level. There are numerous unanswered questions about the water channel, for example: was it first dug on the wrong level, and then tunnelled at the lower level? Or was it tunnelled as the channel grew deeper in order to avoid the risk of the side walls collapsing into the channel?
- 22 Following Kastenbein's survey, Kastenbein (1960).
- 23 It is of course extremely difficult to orientate oneself in a tunnel. It is also extremely difficult to describe clearly and concisely an object like the tunnel. This may explain in part why the secondary literature is, or appears to be, misleading in a number of respects, especially concerning the relative straightness of the tunnel.
- 24 Hence the very high ceiling of the north tunnel at this point; it is clear from the abandoned face of the tunnel that it was being dug with the standard size and shape.
- 25 See Széchy (1966) 503f. The natural ventilation of the tunnel is excellent, so much so that the matter of ventilation might easily be overlooked by someone in the tunnel (and indeed is overlooked in the secondary literature).
- 26 Goodfield (1964) 112.

- 27 Goodfield and Toulmin (1965) 52.
- 28 This cliff (east of Tower 28) and the line of the tunnel are marked on the map insert in Kienast (1978). See also the sound arguments by Burns (1971), especially those on p. 178.
- 29 The cross is offset so as not to interrupt the line of sight between opposite plumb lines. Full descriptions and illustrations of all the tools can be found conveniently in Dilke (1971).
- 30 Going round the west end is the easiest and least error-prone route to take, notwithstanding the modern Greek army camp which blocks the route just south of the Roman aqueduct bridge (fieldworkers should beware the camp guard dogs). Burns (1971) suggests that the surveyors could have gone round the east end of the mountain, but the east route, besides being much longer, requires walkers to rise some 40 m to get over the pass between Kastro and the neighbouring mountain at the east end, so this route, like the poles-over-the-top method, would have required many more sightings and calculations (and involve many more errors) than the short west end route.
- 31 This is best seen in front of the Stratos Hotel off Kanari street, where the Byzantine harbour wall has been partially excavated.
- 32 As stated in the standard textbook on the subject, ‘tunnel surveying is one of the most difficult chapters in engineering geodesy and differs from surveying on the surface in many respects’, Széchy (1966) 524.
- 33 This can be found conveniently in Cohen and Drabkin (1966) 341f. with n. 1.
- 34 The dioptra was adopted for astronomical sightings, but there is no evidence that it was employed for surveying purposes.
- 35 We consider the calculation of numbers further, pp. 415–16 below.
- 36 See esp. p. 43f. Space precludes a detailed discussion of this adapted method here.
- 37 See esp. p. 43: ‘This straight line [of poles] would have been beyond the supposed entrance or exit of the tunnel to ensure minute exactness and to facilitate *a line of projection into the tunnel*’ (our italics).
- 38 The total distance between the bottom of the staircase and the start of the built section is about 15m.
- 39 See Széchy (1966) 107.
- 40 See Section 3 above for description and Figures 18.3 and 18.4.
- 41 This seems to be what one of Nonius Datus’ two crews did—turn the wrong way. See 5.2 below.
- 42 We consider timing in 4.3.6 below.
- 43 And elsewhere: Eupalinos’ home town of Megara, for example.
- 44 He also invented the plummet, lathe and lever, according to Pliny *Natural History* 7.198. Clearly a remarkable man, Theodores is also said to have constructed labyrinths, (with Rhoikos) to have invented a method of casting large bronzes, and worked in gold and silver (making the signet ring which Polykrates threw into the sea as his most valued possession, and received back in the belly of a fish, for example, Herodotus 3.41.1).
- 45 A.M.Snodgrass applied this memorable phrase to the traditional concerns of classical archaeologists, in Snodgrass (1984) 230; it can be applied equally to the concerns of some historians of science (and especially mathematics), among others.
- 46 This section was closed when we visited the site.
- 47 It is a reasonable further assumption that work went on round the clock. This will not affect the calculation.
- 48 Estimates vary from 5 to 15 years. See Jantzen, Felsch and Kienast (1973) and Mitchell (1975).

- 49 Distance per day=length of tunnel/(years taken×365). Thus, 620/1825=0.34 m/day.
 50 620/3650=0.17 m/day.
 51 5 years on the north tunnel minus 3.38 years on the south=1.62 year difference.
 52 10 years minus 6.7 years.
 53 (1.62×365)×0.34=201, or (3.3×365)×0.17=205.
 54 365 (days)×0.34 (m/day)=124 metres.
 55 1040-124=916 m to dig; @ 34 cm/day=2694 days=7.38 years. Alternatively, 1040-62=978 m to dig; @ 17 cm/day=5753 days=15.76 years.
 56 No one has yet been able to find evidence of such a shaft, and the argument that the top of the shaft was deliberately hidden because it was outside the city walls will not work for the bottom of the postulated shaft inside of the tunnel, where there was no reason to hide it. Likewise the argument that the tunnel lining at the north end may have masked the bottom of the shaft is a poor one. The (Roman) lining starts some 22 m in, whereas the shaft at the south end is about 18 m in. So the postulated shaft, for which there is no evidence inside or out, would have to have been built at least 4 m further in (and up the mountain) than at the south end.
 57 Hence the surveying marks 'in the tunnel' referred to by Kienast (1990) 45? Further discussion of them can be found in C.Ptinis (N.D.) 46, 48.
 58 Although there are no other water works comparable in *sophistication* to Eupalinos' tunnel—even in Roman times, there are in the same period (C6 and C5 BC) a number of underground waterworks of considerable size and quality—so much so that miles of conduits built entirely underground in the C6 in Sicily are still in use, supplying water to the populace of modern Siracusa, for example. Other installations using the same techniques, materials of construction, and dimensions, have been found at, for example, Megara, Lindos, Olynthos and Corinth. As Burns notes (1974:405), this indicates that there already existed in the C6 a well-developed profession with established traditions, standards, and methods, and that some of these survive to Vitruvius.
 59 By Mytilenean prisoners of war: see Herodotus 3.39.
 60 In the eastern portion of the isthmus between Athens and the Peloponnese, in mainland Greece.
 61 We will not here address the issue of working conditions for Eupalinos' tunnellers, or their status. But see Pliny *Natural History* 31.70–1 for comparative material: 'by the light of lamps, long galleries are cut into the mountain. Men work in long shifts measured by lamps, and may not see daylight for months on end...the roofs are liable to give way and crush the miners, which makes diving for pearls or getting purple-fish from the depths of the sea seem comparatively safe. So much more dangerous have we made the earth...the miners carry the excavated material out of the workings on their shoulders, each man forming part of a human chain working in the dark; only those at the end of the line see daylight' (Penguin trans.).
 62 The only three trade-names referred to in the Epidauros inscriptions are the excavator (ὄρυκτής), the plasterer (κονιατήρ), and the assistant (ἀρωγός); Burford (1969) 198.
 63 See Xenophon *Cyropaedia* 8.2.5.
 64 See Burford (1969) 35: 'many of the workmen...came from elsewhere, at virtually every stage of the scheme'.
 65 See Cartledge (1979) 142–4, 158–9, and 231; and Shipley (1989) via the index.
 66 Burford argued (cogently, and it is particularly relevant here in view of the Samians' reputation for piracy and kidnapping) that craftsmen would be more likely to work

in a foreign state if some sort of agreement (on legal rights, for example) existed between the craftsman's home *polis* and his current place of work. On the other hand, craftsmen might have left their homelands more or less voluntarily and for numerous reasons, and found Samos an agreeable, or at least tolerable, place of residence in this period.

- 67 Later Polykrates was said to have paid (unspecified) high wages to immigrant craftsmen, Alexis *FGH* 539 F 2.
- 68 See Burford (1969) 197 and table IX.
- 69 The works cannot be dated more precisely than the second and third quarters of the sixth century. Attempts to narrow the dates are based on more or less speculative and more or less plausible contexts to provide motives for their construction. Shipley's attempt (1989:74–80) to attribute the walls, tunnel and breakwater to Polykrates (and push back Polykrates' accession to the 540s in the process) is unconvincing, and appears to be motivated by a misreading of Aristotle *Politics* 1313b24: τῶν περὶ Σάμον ἔργων τὰ Πολυκράτεια, which should be translated 'the Polykratean *part* of the works around Samos' (a partitive genitive, so Barker), not 'the Polykratean works around Samos'.
- 70 Besides preying on Spartan gift-exchange traffic with Lydia and Egypt, and abducting Corinthian hostages en route to Lydia, during this excursus we are informed of a number of other specific actions by Samians: Mytileneans (seized after a naval battle) working in chain-gangs on the moat, a Samian attack on Egypt (the Samians had their own base in Egypt, Samos-on-the-Nile, which they were forced to give up when Amasis 'concentrated Greek trade' at Naukratis), Samian exiles plundering Siphnos and then northern Crete, and Samian raids on Aigina.
- 71 Miller (1971) 24.
- 72 See Trevor Hodge (1989), especially p. 129.
- 73 See Burns (1974), especially 405.
- 74 Rather than because of his beautiful and subtle mathematics.
- 75 *Marcellus* 17, Penguin translation.
- 76 He says in his preface, 'I deem it necessary to expound the method partly because I have already spoken of it [*Quadrature of Parabola*, preface] and I do not want to be thought to have uttered vain words, but equally because I am persuaded that it will be of no little service to mathematics; for I apprehend that some, either of my contemporaries or of my successors, will, by means of the method when once established, be able to discover other theorems in addition, which have not yet occurred to me. First then I will set out the very first theorem which became known to me by means of mechanics...' (Heath translation).
- 77 Sarton (1959) 78.
- 78 *On Architecture* 9.Preface.15, our italics. For example, Vitruvius cites Pythagoras' theorem as 'particularly serviceable in the building of staircases' (9.0.7). Vitruvius was writing a handbook of the 'how to' variety for practical application by anyone who had anything to do with building of any sort, which includes, for example, testing the quality of water, the proper and the slapdash way to make the colour black, and how to make and where to put inverted bronze (sounding) vessels around a theatre to 'increase the clearness of sound (of the voice) and awake a harmonious note in unison with itself' (5.5.1–3). The last is fully informed by understanding and discussion of the (mathematical) theories of acoustics and harmonics and their anciently perceived relevance to the serious business of theatre-going and audibility therein.
- 79 *Natural History* 36.121, our italics.

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BARBERS' SHOPS AND PERFUME SHOPS 'Symposia without wine'



Sian Lewis

The most famous barber's shop in Greek history is undoubtedly the establishment in the Piraeus to which a foreigner came one day in 413/12 and began talking about the defeat of Athens' great Sicilian Expedition:

For some stranger, as it seems, landed at the Piraeus and went into a barber's shop, and started to talk about what had happened as though the Athenians already knew about it. When the barber heard this, before anyone else had found out, he ran up to the city and informed the archons, and set the story going in the Agora.

This was how the news of so great a disaster reached the city; the unfortunate barber was deemed to be inventing the news and was tortured until someone else arrived to substantiate his story.¹

The barber's shop was accepted by Greek writers as a centre for hearing and telling news, and the gossip of the barber's shop became proverbial as untrustworthy rumour.² This is not unique to ancient Greece; many other societies have had a similar culture of the barber's or bathhouse. One may perhaps also compare the convention of modern film, from the spaghetti Western to the contemporary thriller, where the hero reaching a new town goes to the barber's to pick up information as well as to rid himself of three months' stubble.³

Plutarch's story is in some ways exceptional, in that it was mainly local and mundane information which found its way round the shops and market. But local and mundane information need not be unimportant. In order to understand the role of the barber's shop in Greek society it is necessary to understand how information was circulated in ancient Greek states. In one sense, the Greeks defined themselves through their exchanges of information. The Persian King Cyrus spoke of the Greeks as 'men who gather in the market-place to deceive one another under oath', while one of Aristotle's definitions of the Greek *polis* was as a community small enough to be addressed by a single herald.⁴

This kind of definition was also applied within the *polis*, to distinguish the citizen from the non-citizen, in terms of participation in the public exchange of information. Demosthenes, in his speech *Against Aristogeiton*, attempts to show that Aristogeiton should be considered suspect by the jurors because he is not seen in public, either

in the Agora or in a shop, as Demosthenes claims is normal for any Athenian man: 'Every single [citizen] frequents the Agora on some business, either public or private. But not Aristogeiton...he does not spend time at any barber's shop or perfume shop or any other shop in the city.'⁵ The implication is not only that Aristogeiton is an unfit member of the citizen body because he does not act in the same way as everyone else, but also that he must have some shameful secret to hide, if he is unwilling to appear in public. Conversely it is the honest man's boast that he lives his life in public and leaves every area of his existence open to the scrutiny of others.⁶ Secrecy, and lack of communication, is unnatural—the citizen, by definition, should have nothing to hide.

Ancient Athens was, by modern standards, an oral rather than a literate society: business of all kinds, public and private, was conducted orally, rather than by written means. In particular, the business of government and law was based almost entirely on the spoken word—the citizens gathered in assembly to hear orators presenting their proposals in speeches, laws and decrees were discussed and voted on, witnesses in court gave evidence orally, until the beginning of the fourth century, and business contracts were sworn before witnesses. This is not to say that writing was not used, or that there was no place for documents: decrees and laws were published on stone, some records kept, and written contracts made for financial transactions. Where writing was used, however, for example to publish the texts of new laws, these texts were also read out in the assembly; writing played a secondary role to the spoken word.⁷

News could be spread within a *polis* either by public announcement, or by informal word of mouth. The Athenians were certainly keen to hear the latest news—Demosthenes in the 340s depicted his fellow citizens in the Agora asking one another 'λέγεται τι καινόν;', 'what's new?' (literally, 'is anything new told?')—and even in the time of St Paul, the Athenians were characterized as spending their time 'in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing'.⁸ There were no written media for the dissemination of news, no newspapers or bulletin boards, and all news was spread orally. Yet paradoxically there was also no Greek tradition of the public announcement of news for its innate interest, or of any system resembling town-criers.

There were certainly state-employed heralds (κήρυκες), but the Greek herald made announcements only in connection with the running of the state. A herald convened and dismissed assemblies and read out documents or inscriptions there, announced lists of confiscated properties, inheritances and heiresses, attended magistrates and carried messages, as well as making proclamations to the army and performing roles in religious ceremony, but all these functions were tied very closely to state business, and the herald remained in the service either of a specific magistrate or of the council. Each deme also had its own herald, who carried out the same duties at a local level; although these deme heralds might spread news among the community, announcing, say, that a son had been disinherited by his father, such information was not announced because it was news of general interest, but because, in a society without legal documentation, a disinheritance had to be made public in order to be effective.⁹ If a citizen wanted to hear news, or information about matters

not directly concerned with the running of the state, he would have to look elsewhere. The first place was the agora, the ‘thronged and fragrant centre’, a place strongly associated with news.¹⁰

Much talk went on in the agora—it was the place in which news was most easily made public. The news of the Sicilian disaster spread among the citizens there; Theophrastos, writing in the 320s, depicts the newsmongering man as accosting his friends in the agora with all his latest stories; the news of the disaster at Elateia in 339 was told there, so that all the citizens knew about it by the following day:

It was evening, and a messenger came to the *prytaneis* with the news that Elateia had been taken. Some of them straightaway got up from their dinner and drove the people from their stalls in the agora, and set fire to the booths. Others sent for the generals and summoned the herald; and the city was full of uproar. On the following day, as soon as it was light, the *prytaneis* called a council meeting in the *bouleuterion*, and you [the citizens] went off to the assembly...¹¹

It was also a place where actions would be observed by others; in Demosthenes’ speech *Against Phainippos* the plaintiff asserts that Phainippos, who was supposed to provide him with an inventory of goods, made a point of meeting him in the agora to hand over a piece of paper, to suggest by public show that he had in fact given the inventory. Accusations in lawsuits of attempts made to spread rumours around the agora are common; this was the place where information was most visibly circulated.¹²

Political life did not begin and end with news coming from outside the *polis* to the citizens: the public discussion of political events was an experience shared by all male citizens. Since the radical democracy empowered the views of the individual male citizen to an unusual degree, issues of political significance needed to be discussed in the public forum in order for opinion to be formed. Finley refers to a ‘continuous process of political education’ necessary to the democracy, in which all citizens could participate by engaging in discussion and debate.¹³ On the occasion of the launching of the Sicilian Expedition in 415, for instance, Plutarch depicts groups of all ages sitting in public places discussing the proposal, the young in the palaistras where they gathered for athletic training, and the older men in workshops and public meeting-places (*ἡμικύκλια*).¹⁴

The shop was, in contrast to the agora, home to information of a more specific nature, about neighbours, local events, or public figures. Aristophanes’ play *Wealth*, for instance, depicts the friends and neighbours of Khremes learning from rumours circulating in the barbers’ shops that he has become rich overnight.¹⁵ This is a good illustration of the level of information generally to be found in such places. Compared to Plutarch’s account of vital news arriving, such ‘idle conversation and gossip’ may seem trivial.¹⁶ But this kind of information was as important in a different way—Aeschines argues in his accusation of Timarkhos for the importance of *φήμη* (rumour) in determining a man’s reputation: ‘But concerning the life and deeds of men, an incontrovertible rumour spreads of its own accord throughout the city, and brings private deeds to the attention of all, and often even prophecies

what is going to happen.¹⁷ The nature of Athenian society made reputation extremely important—for the Greeks, to be and to seem were very much the same thing.¹⁸ The information circulated about citizens and their private behaviour had a direct relevance to legal and political affairs. Nor was 'idle conversation' about people, their reputations, activities and motives, the only topic discussed in this way. Shops and workshops, as mentioned above, could also act as centres of political discussion.¹⁹

Primarily the shop served as a meeting-place outside the house where friends could gather in an informal setting. This contrast between agora and shop is part of a distinction which was central to Greek society. Greek life was demarcated into the public domain (the agora and palaistra) and the private (the house), and the division between these was conceptually sharp.²⁰ Jameson has demonstrated the difference between the architecture of the house and the shop: a house was inward-looking, planned around a central court with only one entrance, whereas the shop, when it formed part of a private house, had no communication with other rooms, and opened only onto the street. Cohen elaborates further on this theme, emphasizing that the distinction between public and private was comparative rather than completely oppositional; what was considered private (or public) could vary depending on circumstances. He says: 'in Athens, a symposium taking place within the house is seen as private in relation to conversation in the agora or baths, for example, but public in relation to the free women in the house.'²¹

Public life embraced a variety of events ranging from the totally public (such as attending the assembly) to the virtually private (such as arranging a marriage, which would be done in one's own house). The shop, whether a barber's or perfumer's, saddler's or cobbler's (all of which are documented as meeting-places) was a halfway house. A small group of friends could meet here regularly, to discuss business either public or private, more openly than in a house, but in a semi-private setting. In terms of public and private the *symposion* and the meeting in a shop occupy complementary positions within the spectrum: the *symposion* is a public occasion within the private sphere, while the shop is a private meeting in the public sphere.

Lysias suggests in the course of a lawcourt speech that all Athenians were in the habit of visiting some shop and passing their time there, and mainly in those shops closest to the agora. This implies that it was a large and significant part of Athenian life. One must of course treat such sources with caution; the defendant is a craftsman who has been accused of allowing his shop to be used as a meeting-place by a bunch of rogues for the hatching of plots.²² It is in his interest to claim that the meeting in a shop is part of respectable citizen life. But equally, for such a claim to be persuasive to a jury, it must contain some element of truth.

Even if ancient Athens was small enough for many people to be known by all, those who met in shops naturally formed smaller communities. This is well illustrated by the speech of Lysias *Against Pankleon*—the speaker was trying to establish the identity of one Pankleon, who claimed to belong to the deme Dekeleia, and to be a citizen of Plataia. Wishing to find out about Pankleon from his fellow demesmen, the speaker went to the barber's shop in the street of the Hermai, where the Dekeleians regularly gathered.²³ This is a recognized place to find the Dekeleians,

although one should not afford this kind of meeting official status—the deme Dekeleia had its own assembly to discuss matters of deme administration and religion. It was rather an informal gathering, designed to facilitate business contacts. Similarly, the speaker wished to discover whether Pankleon was a Plataian, and after making inquiries of all the other Plataians whom he knew, he was directed to the fresh cheese market on the last day of the month, on which day there was a gathering of the Plataians.²⁴

This speech reveals a number of things. First, that groups of men met regularly, at a particular place and time; it was not haphazard. The important point is that each shop would be host to a regular group of individuals. Second, that the kind of information to be sought here is local but nevertheless important—in a society without birth certificates or personal documentation, establishing someone's identity can only be done by the word of others. Third, that there was nothing unusual about this kind of gathering. Demosthenes, as we have seen, attempts to show that Aristogeiton is suspect because he is not seen in public at any shop. Demosthenes is vague (and probably deliberately so) about the nature of the business that can be conducted in a shop, since he is appealing to the broadest possible norm. The evidence that we have supports the idea that one would use a shop as a place outside one's own house to make oneself accessible to anyone else—the speaker of Demosthenes' *Against Phormion*, for instance, was trying to serve a summons on one Phormion, and made inquiries as to where he could be found; he was informed that Phormion was at the perfume-market, and accordingly found him there. Similarly, Socrates in the *Memorabilia* goes looking for the youth Euthydemus, and finds him in his usual haunt of a saddler's shop close to the agora, where he waited to conduct business because he was too young to enter the agora proper.²⁵ This last provides a good illustration of the role of the shop between public and private—one can transact public business there without entering the public spaces.

The reason why some shops are more often cited in this context than others lies in part in the nature of the goods on sale. A perfumer's or saddler's will be a more appealing proposition as a place to spend time than, say, a butcher's or tanner's. The barber's shop fills this role best because it is a place where one has to spend time in order to obtain the service. It is also a socially fluid place where numerous people would drop in and out, and it is the barber's shop where the idea of rumour is strongest—the 'common rumour of the barber's shop' is something to be discounted. The location of a shop was also relevant. It is probably significant that the barber's shop in the story of Plutarch about the arrival of news from outside the city was situated in the Piraeus, where there was always a greater number of foreign travellers and traders than in the city proper. The Piraeus, with its transient population, was a place to which news readily came (brought by the traders who frequented the port), and where a barber would attract a constantly changing clientele, rather than an unchanging group of locals.²⁶ Opinions vary as to how salubrious Piraeus shops and inns might have been, but certainly the chance traveller played as important a part here as the local. In contrast Aristophanes, in the *Birds*, describes a scene of older men sitting in the barber's and complaining about their sons' latest enthusiasms; this is the idea of the shop as local centre.²⁷

Theophrastos refers to barbers' shops as 'symposia without wine', suggesting that 'because of the chatter of those who come to sit there', the gathering in a shop could be considered similar to the *symposion*, or drinking-party.²⁸ This is an interesting comparison. The *symposion* was a private drinking-party, usually involving a small group of friends meeting regularly at the house of the host, at which ritualized drinking and entertainment, intellectual or otherwise, took place.²⁹ Even in its non-intellectual manifestation, the *symposion* is connected in our sources with the aristocracy: those meeting on such occasions are presumed to be both wealthy and influential, men with a primary role in the running of the state.³⁰ Aristophanes in the *Wasps* plays on the idea of an unsophisticated peasant who has to be taught how to behave at a dinner-party; the right behaviour involves telling boastful anecdotes about services to the state as ambassador, or praising the furniture, while telling obscene stories and farting are wrong.³¹ Thus Theophrastos' comment appears to make a distinction between the wealthy upper class, who could afford to host *symposia*, and the poorer classes, who would rely on informal gatherings in a semi-public sphere for the same experience.

In particular, it is the place of intellectual discussion, philosophy, which is at issue. The philosophers who emerged in Athens at the end of the fifth century taught not by written but by oral means, either through public lectures or simply through conversation, the method of dialectic made famous by Socrates. Each of the philosophical schools had a regular meeting-place; the Academy of Plato and the Lyceum of Aristotle derived their names from the places where the philosophers held court. Philosophers held discussions in a variety of places; in the works of Plato and Xenophon we see meetings in the gymnasium, in private houses, and in shops.³² Socrates was traditionally believed to have held court at the shop of Simon the cobbler, a place in the agora which has been tentatively identified by the discovery of a named potsherd.³³ In some literary sources discussions in shops are presented as the opportunity for the poor to hear these ideas—the conversations of philosophers in shops are seen as bringing culture to the masses. The *Anthologia Palatina* includes an epigram on a barber who, after prolonged exposure to philosophical discussion in his shop, ran away to become a philosopher himself, while, more mundanely, a character in a comedy by Eupolis claims that he has learnt much by listening, unobtrusively, in the barber's shop, and appearing not to understand.³⁴ This might seem to indicate that participation in such discussions is the province of the idle rich, and that they are meetings of intellectuals in places favoured by the wealthy. Perfume is characterized as the mark of the rich man, and even being barbered regularly could be a sign of aristocratic ambition—Theophrastos' portrait of petty pride is of a man who is barbered many times in the month, as well as keeping his teeth white.³⁵ Should we see such discussions as the province of the upper classes, with the poor able only to listen?

Such a view presupposes a clear division between the intellectuals and the lower classes. It is a division accepted by some modern writers, who then bring forward evidence to explain how such a distinction could be circumvented. Meiggs envisages the 'wider public' having to pick up knowledge of philosophical ideas from the barber's and the baths in order to understand Aristophanes' comedies, while Themistokles' success as a politician is ascribed in part to his willingness to

communicate with the lower classes in an unusually egalitarian way for an aristocrat.³⁶ Ober argues for the easy transmission of rumour between classes, but his examples nevertheless rest on a fairly rigid class division: he suggests that gossip might pass from paid entertainers to guests at *symposia*, and that the rich might have individual poor friends, like the speaker of Lysias' *On the Invalid*, who was himself poor, but claimed to have wealthy friends from whom he could borrow a horse.³⁷ In fact all these examples point to the conclusion that the division between classes was not so distinct, and it was not rare for the poor to encounter the rich. Other groupings existed within the *polis* which were independent of class boundaries, such as deme communities. Kimon was noted for treating his fellow-demesmen with particular generosity, and Isaïos shows a man receiving aid from the members of his deme.³⁸ Social mobility, on the increase from the end of the fifth century, also ensured that a wealthy and influential man might have less exalted friends.

Some groupings were obviously more exclusive than others; just as the Dekeleians met at their appointed time and place, so Aristophanes parodies the trendy literary jargon of those who frequent the perfume-market—the 'beardless youths' who indulge in high-flown literary chat, and who are shown to belong to the upper classes.³⁹ The truth seems to be that not all barbers' shops were the same, the clientele depending on location and standing. Lysias' 'invalid' is a poor man and is accused of having low worthless types frequent his shop; the men represented as sitting in the barber's shop in Aristophanes' *Birds* are of moderate wealth and of an age. Equally there are indications that *symposia*, despite their aristocratic image, had begun to spread to other classes by the end of the fifth century, such as the limits imposed on prices charged by entertainers, recorded by Aristotle.⁴⁰ There is no indication that *symposia* and shops concerned mutually exclusive groups. A *symposion*, while always demanding a certain level of wealth, could be simple or ostentatiously expensive, and similarly the aristocrats may have felt the barbers' shops of the Piraeus to be beneath them, but still visited a perfume shop to meet their peers during the day. Theophrastos' jest is no more than that; he is not making a serious equation between the *symposion* and the barber's shop.

That is not to say that class had no effect on one's experience of public and private life, only that the citizen male, whether rich or poor, was a member of a privileged group. The key concept is that of leisure; in order to spend time discussing matters in public a man needed to be able to leave his livelihood, and to do so he had either to have an income independent of his trade, or to replace his own labour with that of his slaves. This idea is exploited in the literary motif of the barber who becomes a philosopher—those earning their livelihood as small shopkeepers would not have the leisure to gain experience of philosophy unless through others holding meetings in their shop. When these literary barbers run away, they are usually said to have shut up their shop first, signalling that they have abandoned their previous means of livelihood. Those least likely to be leisured were labourers and small traders, especially those who lived in the countryside of Attica. Dikaiopolis, in Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, dreams of a golden age of self-sufficiency when he and his fellow-villagers could produce all they needed without buying goods or visiting the town.⁴¹ This distance between city- and country-dwellers is satirized by both Theophrastos and Aristophanes, and in this context even visiting a barber's shop

becomes a luxury, something one might do on a rare visit to town.⁴² So the difference is not one of class, but of leisure.

The barber's shop, then, was not a lower-class version of the *symposion*, because its role cannot be summarized so simply. In all its forms the barber's shop played an important part in the information network within the *polis*, spreading both news from outside the city and (to a larger extent) internal gossip. The precise nature of the information learned in a shop depended on where it was and who went there, and shops varied as much as their clientele. As an intermediate stage in public space between the house and the agora or gymnasium, they allowed the citizens to form and maintain relationships larger than kinship groups, but smaller than city-wide structures, providing a milieu in which information could easily circulate.

In this sense the meeting in a perfume shop, or wherever, formed a part of the citizen ethic, along with the idea of participation in politics. This is the motif that Lysias and Demosthenes attempt to invoke with the statement that all Athenians spend time in a shop; all citizen men should do this, because their participation is one of the criteria which mark them out as citizens. For this reason, all citizen men subscribed at an abstract level to the belief that the orators propose, the countryman in his local deme as much as the town-dweller, even if he had less actual opportunity to participate. The information that was circulated in shops and in the agora, even if only 'rude jokes about other people's sex lives', was integral to the life of the city, because it affected reputation and public standing.⁴³ Conversation in the agora and shops was part of the daily life of a citizen, because to be an Athenian was not only to be an individual, but also part of a greater whole.

NOTES

- 1 Plutarch *Nikias* 30.
- 2 For the barber's shop as a centre for news, see Lysias 24.20, 23.3, Demosthenes 25.52, Hyperides 4.21, Theophrastos *Characters* 8, Philodemos *De Ira* col. 21 ll. 23ff.; for proverbial unreliability, see Polybius 3.20.5.
- 3 An example of the first is *High Plains Drifter* (1972); of the second, *Mississippi Burning* (1988).
- 4 Herodotus 1.153.1; Aristotle *Politics* 1326b1–7.
- 5 Demosthenes 25.51–2.
- 6 Aeschines 1.48, 121, Demosthenes 18.10, Hyperides 1.14, Demosthenes 54.15–16.
- 7 R.Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Oxford, 1988), 64–5.
- 8 Demosthenes 4.10; *Acts* 17.21.
- 9 [Aristotle] *Athēnaion Politeia* 43.4, 62, Andokides 1.36 (convening the *boule*), Aristophanes *Acharnians* 1073–77 (carrying messages); for duties of local heralds, Plutarch *Alkibiades* 3, Demosthenes 39.39, Plutarch *Themistokles* 2.
- 10 Pindar fr. 75.5 (quoted by C.G.Starr, *Political Intelligence in Classical Greece*, *Mnemosyne* supplement 31 (Leiden, 1974), 33).
- 11 Theophrastos *Characters* 8; Demosthenes 18.169; see also Aristophanes *Thesmophoriazousai* 577–8.

- 12 Demosthenes 42.14; for putting rumours around the agora, Demosthenes 21.103–4 and 24.15 are examples.
- 13 M.I.Finley, *Politics in the Ancient World* (Cambridge, 1983), 82, 71–5.
- 14 Plutarch *Nikias* 12.1, *Alkibiades* 17.3; see also Isokrates 7.15, 18.9.
- 15 Aristophanes *Wealth* 377–8, *Ekklesiazousai* 302.
- 16 V.J.Hunter, ‘Gossip and the politics of reputation in classical Athens’, *Phoenix* 44 (1990), 302.
- 17 Aeschines 1.127, also 2.145.
- 18 K.J.Dover, *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Aristotle and Plato* (Oxford, 1974), 226.
- 19 The workshop, ἐργαστήριον, figures in our sources as a centre both for political disaffection and for conspiracies of a criminal nature (Demosthenes 32.10, 37.39, 39.2, 40.9, Isokrates 7.15); it was felt to be more suspect as a place in which slaves worked, and where they might mix with free men.
- 20 S.C.Humphreys, *The Family, Women and Death: Comparative Studies* (London, 1983), ch. 3; M.Jameson, ‘Private space and the Greek city’, in O.Murray and S.R.F.Price (eds), *The Greek City from Homer to Alexander* (Oxford, 1990), 171–95.
- 21 D.Cohen, *Law, Sexuality, and Society: The Enforcement of Morals in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 1991), 74.
- 22 Lysias 24.19–20: ἕκαστος γὰρ ὑμῶν εἴθισται προσφοιτᾶν ὁ μὲν πρὸς μυροπώλιον, ὁ δὲ πρὸς κουρεῖον, ὁ δὲ πρὸς σκυτοτομεῖον, ὁ δ’ ὅποι ἂν τύχῃ, καὶ πλείστοι μὲν ὥς τοὺς ἐγγυτάτῳ τῆς ἀγορᾶς κατεσκευασμένους, ἐλάχιστοι δὲ ὥς τοὺς πλείστον ἀπέχοντας αὐτῆς.
- 23 Lysias 23.3; also *IG* ii² 1327 63–4. A modern comparison was suggested to me by Anton Powell: in the late 1980s Polish men met outside the meat market in the Nottingham Victoria Centre.
- 24 Lysias 23.6.
- 25 Demosthenes 34.13; Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.2.1.
- 26 For the spreading of news by traders, see Lykourgos *Against Leokrates* 14–15, Xenophon *Anabasis* 5.6.21, Lysias 22.14, Plutarch *Solon* 2, Sophocles *Philoktetes* 547–552.
- 27 Aristophanes *Birds* 1441.
- 28 Plutarch *Moralia* 679A.
- 29 See O.Murray, ‘Symptotic history’, in O.Murray (ed.), *Sympotica: Proceedings of a Symposium on the Symposion* (Oxford, 1990), 5–7.
- 30 The connection between the *symposion* and the *betaireia*, or political club, was close; see O.Murray, ‘The affair of the Mysteries: democracy and the drinking group’, in *Sympotica*, 149–61.
- 31 Aristophanes *Wasps* 1174–324.
- 32 Philosophers meet in a private house in Plato *Prodikos* and *Gorgias*, in the palaistra in (for example) *Charmides* and *Euthydemus*, and in shops in Xenophon *Memorabilia* 4.2, 3.10 and 3.11.
- 33 H.A.Thompson and R.E.Wycherley, *The Athenian Agora* xiv (Princeton, 1972), 174.
- 34 *Anthologia Palatina* 6.307, also Diogenes Laertius 2.122, *Socraticorum Epistulae* 13; Eupolis fr. 180. J.Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology and the Power of the People* (Princeton, 1989), 148–9 ascribes this to the politician Hyperboles, in which case it is a joke of the same kind as Aristophanes *Lysistrata* 1126–7 and *Ekklesiazousai* 243–4, but the distinction it draws between speakers and listeners is still valid.

- 35 Theophrastos *Characters* 21.
- 36 R.Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972), 287; P.Green *The Year of Salamis 480–79 BC* (London, 1970), 26: 'We can imagine [Themistokles] talking to his friends down in the Piraeus taverns—where no self-respecting aristocrat would deign to go.'
- 37 Ober, *Mass and Elite* 148–9; Lysias 24.11.
- 38 [Aristotle] *Athenaion Politeia* 27.3, Plutarch *Kimon* 10; Isaios 2.36.
- 39 Aristophanes *Knights* 1375.
- 40 [Aristotle] *Athenaion Politeia* 50.2; see J.Bremmer, 'Adolescents, *symposion*, and pederasty', in O.Murray, *Sympotica* (above n. 29) 136–9. The unclear distinction between a *symposion* and a meeting in a shop is exploited by Demosthenes in the speech *Against Konon* (54.7–8): Konon claimed to have been dining with friends, in a formal sense, but the speaker depicts him gathering with his friends at the house of Pamphilos the fuller for a drinking session, after which the group went out to ambush the speaker. Naming Pamphilos' profession makes the gathering resemble less a respectable *symposion*, and more a meeting in low circumstances for criminal purposes.
- 41 Aristophanes *Acharnians* 32–6.
- 42 References to hair-style as an indicator of sophistication appear in Aristophanes *Clouds* 43–4 and Theophrastos *Characters* 4; the distinction persisted in Roman times, for example in Horace *Satires* 1.3.30–1. Compare also Frank Churchill's visit to London to have his hair cut in Jane Austen's *Emma* (ed. James Kinsley (Oxford, 1990), 184).
- 43 Aristophanes *Clouds* 1003.

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BIONIC STATUES



Nigel Spivey

D'ALEMBERT: *Je voudrais bien que vous me dissiez quelle différence vous mettez entre l'homme et la statue, entre le marbre et la chair.*
 DIDEROT: *Assez pen. On fait du marbre avec de la chair, et de la chair avec du marbre.*

Denis Diderot

One of the surest ways of raising a laugh during a lecture on classical sculpture is to recount some of the ancient anecdotes about statues and their makers. The source of amusement is invariably this: a naive accreditation of movement or feeling to patently immobile and emotionless objects of marble or bronze. So, of the statue of a heifer made by the early-fifth-century BC sculptor Myron which once stood on the Athenian Acropolis, one can quote a clutch of epigrams from *The Greek Anthology*: 'I am Myron's little heifer, set up on a base. Goad me, herdsman, and drive me off to the herd.' 'A calf died beside thy heifer, Myron, deceived into thinking that the bronze had milk inside.' 'In vain, bull, thou rushest up to this heifer, for it is lifeless. The sculptor of cows, Myron, deceived thee.' 'The lead and stone hold me fast, but otherwise, thanks to thee, sculptor Myron, I would be nibbling lotus and rushes.'

There are more of this ilk, as observers of the statue compete with apophthegms to testify to its naturalism.¹ The mind boggles to think of it, either on the Acropolis or transferred to the Roman Forum (where it is supposed to have stood in Vespasian's Temple of Peace), being mounted by bulls, or yoked up by oafish ploughboys. Obviously we are not intended to take these epigrams as a proper commentary; and since the statue has not survived, we have no way of judging its bovine verisimilitude for ourselves. But the ancient reaction to Myron's work cannot be dismissed as an aggregation of rhetorical conceits. Another celebrated (and also lost) statue by Myron was a victory monument to a runner called Ladas, of which an anonymous pundit in the *Anthologia Palnudea* (IV. 54) predicts, 'anon the bronze will leap to seize the crown and the base will hold it no longer; see how art is swifter than the wind!' We do not know whether the statue of Ladas the runner was chained to its base in order that it might not run away, but certainly such fixtures were visible on statues encountered in various Greek cities and sanctuaries by Pausanias;² and although we

might nowadays take these chains to be sensible anti-theft devices, no ancient writer suggests such a prosaic function. No: chains are there by public order, lest the statue walk (or sprint) away.³ This is the repeated message of the epigrammatists. Although they waver between describing the heifer as *apnoos*, or 'without respiration', and Ladas as *empnoos*, or 'full of breath', they evidently reflect popular supposition that statues are animate, or potentially animate.

Laughable as this supposition seems, it presents a genuine challenge to anyone seeking to understand the function of statues in Greek society. Greek statues continue to serve as 'classic' touchstones for Western art, exemplary of order, of control, of skill: but to shackle them down lest they demonstrate automatic mobility never enters our heads. That is the stuff of opera (*Don Giovanni*), or the science-fiction romancing of cybernetic technology—or it is pure child's play. In a memorable passage of his *The Greeks and the Irrational*, E.R.Dodds mentions the ancient funerary practice of pouring 'liquids down a feeding-tube into the livid jaws of a mouldering corpse', and comments: 'Man, I take it, feeds his dead for the same sort of reason as a little girl feeds her doll; and like the little girl, he abstains from killing his phantasy by applying reality-standards.'⁴ The same refusal to apply reality-standards regularly confronts us in the anecdotal records of statues in Greek society: but it is grown men, not little girls, who see statues move, weep, and sweat; who attempt to copulate with statues; who bind statues with chains. How are we to understand this?

From one point of view, the Greek tendency to animate statues ought to be easy to deal with. After all, it may be very similar to the modern fascination with gadgets of 'virtual reality', or akin perhaps to the postmodernist trend of conflating the real with the fictional. And one of the more piquant of recent perfume advertisements implicitly inverted the Pygmalion story: the moment when the sculptor Pygmalion kisses his 'perfect' marble woman, that she may come alive (see Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 10, 280ff.) is allowed to a fur-clad lady (presumably steeped in Fendi scents) swooning by the ideal features of a classical youth (Figure 20.1). Viewed as archetypes of incorrigible human idealism, ancient Greek attitudes towards statues may be less childish than we think.

Generalized comparisons are readily made, because classical Greece is not the only time and place for instances of the supposed animation of statues. But classical Greece remains very much the *locus classicus* for stories of animation, and any sympathetic consideration of those stories needs to be prefaced by their historiographical and mythical contexts. Such items of prolegomena may be manifold, but four factors in particular seem to be important. They are as follows:

(i) The art-historical packaging of Greek statues. Traditional taxonomies of Greek sculpture are not very helpful to anyone seeking insight into the motives of Greek artists producing ever more naturalistic work. The sculptor of the heifer is a case in point. No original work of Myron survives, yet on the basis of copies and anecdotes he is classified as an exponent of the 'Severe Style'. That is, his work is reckoned discernibly more 'taut', 'dynamic', etc. than that of his 'Archaic' predecessors. Myron's style is a 'break with the past', perhaps to be linked to the Persian invasions of the early fifth century BC; it may also be loosely connected

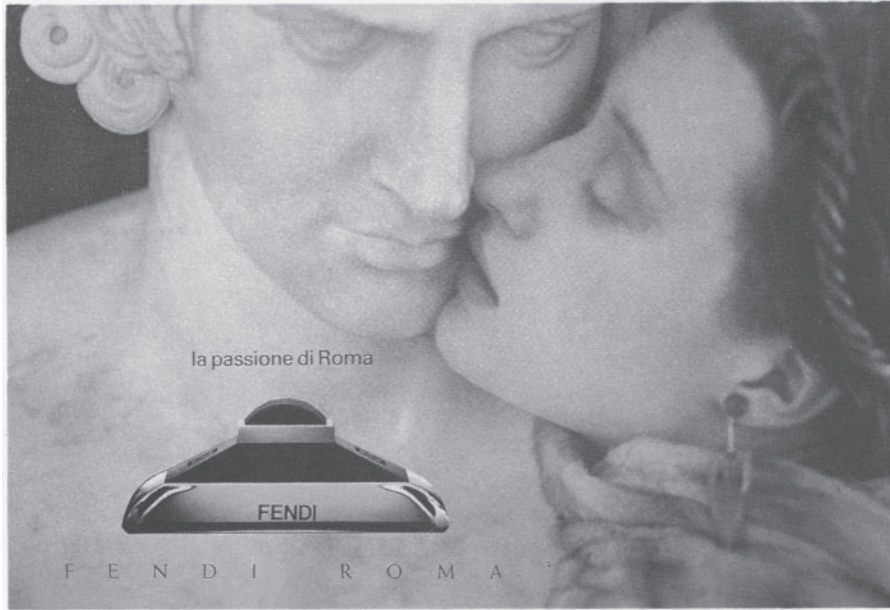


Figure 20.1 'La passione di Roma': advertisement for Fendi perfume, c. 1990.

with the increased exposure of dynamic bodies at athletic festivals. Plenty of handbooks on Greek art will tell us that much.⁵ But the language of art history falls short of describing the circumstantial forces of popular belief which may have propelled Myron in the direction of increased naturalism. Why might a sculptor have sought to 'fool the public' with a bronze heifer? What sort of *mentalité* prevailed during Myron's production of these 'revolutionary' works? If we can understand the phenomenon of animated statues, we may get some way to answering such questions.

(ii) The Greek view of Greek statues. Recreating a social environment for Greek statuary would be a good deal easier if we had more in the way of contemporary comments to guide our retrospection. It is enough to browse through the theories of aestheticians in the mould of H.-G. Gadamer to realize that our expectations of what is possible from such hermeneutic exercises should be pitched low;⁶ but at least we can try to project *some* historical sensibilities upon such ancient literary evidence as there is. It looks as if the literary discussion of works of art was a practice of the Hellenistic world; and the textual canonization of this art-talk mostly belongs within the ambience of Roman connoisseurship, with *cognoscenti* looking for good stories about 'names' such as Myron in order to heighten the value of their collections. The results are duly anthologized by the Elder Pliny in the mid-first century AD.⁷

Other tales about classical Greek statues come from early Christian polemicists who are already convinced of the evil of idolatry: witness Clement of Alexandria's *Exhortation to the Greeks*, written towards the end of the second century AD. And while we are being careful about literary circumstances, we should note that even in

the relatively few accounts we possess of classical Greek authors writing about classical Greek statues, literary commonplaces (*topoi*) are evident. So proper discrimination is needed in extracting the significance of what is optimistically called 'ancient art criticism'.

(iii) The mythical contexts of Greek statues. 'Mythical' is here used in a broad sense, to include the subconscious bandying-about of stereotypes. We need to recognize the extent to which statues and 'real beings' are interchanged in the 'constitutive imagination' of the Greeks.⁸ Just as the lyrics of modern popular songs ('Got myself a crying, walking, sleeping, talking, living doll' etc.) partly betray the workings and associations of a typical modern mind,⁹ so we may be able to locate tokens of an ancient Greek mentality from colloquial expressions and patterns of myth. For example, one of the taunts traded by the fourth-century BC Athenian orators Demosthenes and Aeschines is directed at the overweening narcissism of Aeschines. This was apparent at an early age when his mother cosseted him and called him, so Demosthenes claims, *ton kalon andrianta*.¹⁰ To be hailed as a *kalos andrias* ('dear little statue', or 'pretty puppet') seems innocent enough—compare our own expression, 'pretty as a picture'—but it may be some sort of giveaway. So too the apparently incidental details of certain well-known stories. How bizarre was it, to a Greek, to think of the young Pelops being patched up by the gods with an ivory shoulder?

(iv) The archaeological contexts of Greek statues. Wrenching sculpture from its original architectural setting generally makes interpretation difficult.¹¹ The transfer of individual statues from their former locations into museums is no less likely to sabotage our understanding of them. What is primarily lost is religious significance; statues may also have been 'alive' in the sense that they were once programmed to demagogic purposes which we can at least try to reconstruct, even if we lack the documentation necessary for a fully iconological method. Iconology depends heavily upon written records; but here it is the archaeological evidence we shall have to consult. The consequences of Greek anthropomorphism ought to be visible in the archaeology of Greek sanctuaries, given that the *naos* of a temple or shrine was conceived as the dwelling-place or *oikos* of the deity or hero worshipped there.¹² Herodotus gives us two examples of people actually praying in front of statues (I. 31.4—Kleobis and Biton—and VI. 61), and we ought to be able to trace in the remains of cult practice the popular faith in a statue's capacity to embody an actual presence.

The title of this essay calls upon a relatively modern and certainly colloquial neologism to describe the phenomenon of 'lively' or 'lifelike' statues. 'Bionic' is a word the Greeks might have understood, even if (strictly speaking) it implies electronic implantations. It should be taken here in its modern idiomatic sense. Greek statues are 'bionic' because they are amazing, superhuman, and surprising. Our first job is to recover for ourselves a sense of amazement or enchantment in front of these works; to distinguish between what is purely 'the shock of the new' and what is genuinely impressive in the sense of answering long-held aspirations, or is successful in properly representing the idealistic. This is not easy; but we can begin by making ourselves aware of our own art-historical perspective.

According to Sir Ernst Gombrich, the attribution of 'movement' to statues is

subsumed by the 'Great Awakening' said to have happened in Greece between the seventh and fifth centuries BC. To quote Gombrich: 'The sculptors in their workshops tried out new ideas and new ways of representing the human figure, and each innovation was eagerly taken up by others who added their own discoveries. One discovered how to chisel the trunk, another found out that a statue may look much more alive if the feet are not both placed firmly on the ground. Yet another would discover that he could make a face come alive simply by bending the mouth upwards so that it appeared to smile.'¹³

Notice the implicit motivation given to Greek artists by an authoritative art historian: 'may look *much more alive*...make a face *come alive*'. The background to this Greek technical 'revolution' is Egyptian sculpture, variously reckoned to be 'the old prescription', 'avoiding movement', and bound by 'fixed axes' or a 'law of frontal-ity'.¹⁴ It is tempting to misrepresent Egyptian art as intrinsically unnaturalistic or stylistically comatose (the force of the misrepresentation will be felt by anyone who has, for example, gazed on the sensuous features of Queen Nefertiti); but such an unobvious commonplace may have prevailed in classical Greece too, if a passage of Plato's *Laus* is indicative. Plato's spokesman is praising the Egyptians for their adherence to indigenous or patriotic convention. 'If you inspect their paintings and reliefs on the spot, you will find that the work of ten thousand years ago—I mean the expression not loosely but in all precision—is neither better nor worse than that of today; both exhibit an identical artistry.'¹⁵ We know what Plato is saying here: converted in modern (and pejorative) terms, it amounts to 'See one Egyptian statue and you've seen them all!' To those superficially acquainted with it, there appear to be no surprises in Egyptian art: it is all formulaic and predictable, and its rules are so well defined that there is no question of imagining that its creations will ever come alive.

Plato's approval of statues which do not attempt to fool the public might be viewed as a logical consequence of his attitudes to the limits of *mimesis*, although that is not made explicit in the *Laus*. However, certain passages within other Platonic dialogues imply that it was commonplace to look for signs of animation in statues. At one juncture in the *Meno*, for example, Socrates likens sophistical opinions to the statues (*agalmata*) of Daedalus: 'if they are not fastened they will run away like fugitive slaves'.¹⁶ This is an interesting analogy on two counts. First, it comes from a man who was apprenticed as a sculptor or stonemason by his father, and sometimes attributed with a group of draped Graces set in the niche of the Propylaea;¹⁷ second, and more importantly, because it raises the question of historic consciousness on the part of the Greeks in judging artistic 'progress'. Socrates may allude to Daedalus as his 'ancestor' (*progonos*), but the distance between Daedalus and the sculptors of Socrates' own day is well measured in stylistic terms, as is evident from a remark in the *Hippias Major*: 'According to the sculptors Daedalus would look a fool if he were to be born now and produce the kind of works that gave him his reputation.'¹⁸

Socrates knows what he is talking about. He shows himself aware of the legendary status of a Daedalus who made statues that could 'see' (*blepein*) and 'walk about' (*peripatein*): that is, statues which broke from the supposedly plank-like appearance of Egyptian figures. Yet he is also aware that to a late-fifth-century BC Greek, the statues attributed to this same Daedalus are, in relative terms, ridiculously unnaturalistic.

Socrates therefore provides us with a significant indication of historical sensibility on the part of classical Greeks when assessing the statues that surrounded them. The archaic, or the archaistic, was a quality they recognized: it is not simply a modern category of style. And sculptors evidently responded to the claims of the archaic: the same Myron who was famed for his unnerving naturalism is also recorded as having made a *xoanon*, or stylized archaic (and probably wooden) image of Hekate for her temple on Aigina.¹⁹ As we shall see, there were good social reasons for the maintenance of an archaic and unchanging style in certain types of statuary. But before we address those social reasons, we need to clarify just what Socrates means when he refers to the automatic mobility of ‘Daedalic’ statues. How can they be both formally ‘statue-like’—not easily mistaken for ‘real’ human beings—and yet have a reputation for roaming around?

One answer is that we are here dealing with a *topos* firmly established by the time of Socrates. Many authors refer to the ‘mobility’ of the works of Daedalus, though the passage most often cited—Diodorus Siculus IV.76—belongs to a Roman context. A satyr play by Aeschylus contained the line *to Daidalou m’ijmema phones dei monon*: ‘this likeness by Daedalus—does everything but talk!’²⁰ Amongst the works of Aristophanes is listed a play entitled *Daidalos*: few fragments survive, but the *argumentum* of the play seems to have involved statues deserting their bases, doubtless to cause mischief. And Aristotle cites the son of Aristophanes, one Philippos (also a comic dramatist), when he mentions a belief that Daedalus got a wooden statue of Aphrodite to move by filling it with mercury.²¹ This is mentioned in the course of a discussion of the Democritean theory of the soul as the body’s ‘motor’: a rather crude theory, to Aristotle, but the implicit *tekhne* of Daedalus again surfaces. At least Aristotle furnishes us with an attempt at rationalized explanation: otherwise we would have nothing more to go on than a gnomic remark in the eighth *Ekphrasis* of Callistratus (third century AD) that Daedalus made his statues move by *mekhanai*.²²

The earliest literary evidence for the *topos* of the mobility of statues is not directly connected with the name of Daedalus. It comes in Pindar’s Seventh Olympian, composed in celebration of a Rhodian boxer in 464 BC. Pindar is praising the aboriginal inhabitants of Rhodes for their artistic skill (*sophia*). Pindar does not want to characterize these pioneers as magicians: yet his applause for them is expressed by declaring that their works (*erga*) ‘were like living creatures, at large in the streets.’²³ The ‘lifelike’ quality of statues constitutes a candid criterion for admiring them. This is the force of the *topos*: essentially hailing a special achievement of *tekhne*. What happens, though, is that it becomes mixed with attempts to rationalize the terms of praise. Hence the common-sense version we find in Diodorus, that Daedalus was the first sculptor to make statues with ‘open eyes, and parted legs, and outstretched arms’; and hence the explanation mentioned by Aristotle, about filling statues with quicksilver.

Aristotle’s own inclination to rationalize animated statues may be implied by a well-known passage of his *Politics*: well-known because it is where he asserts that the only alternative to slaves around the house is to have mechanical gadgets.²⁴ Aristotle refers us to the episode in the *Iliad* where Thetis commissions the Shield of Achilles: she approaches the workshop of Hephaistos, and interrupts the divine technician as he is constructing some robotic tripods for the Olympian High Table. These tripods are described by Homer as *automatoi*.²⁵ We take him to mean that they were equipped

with little trolley wheels: such wheels have been found on Geometric tripods, and it is the skill of making tripods mobile that impresses Homer (some mystery has to be left to the gods: so divine mobile tripods do not even require a push). Aristotle may have suspected Daedalus of creating similarly automatic devices for his statues.

Anecdotal evidence testifying public regard for the artist as a socially marginal or aloof figure—a wizard, a fixer, a semi-divine—is widespread, and by no means confined to ancient Greece.²⁶ But this sort of superstition needs to be separated from an aesthetic which both values the craft of realistically figurative art, and yet recognizes vehicles for veneration in old-fashioned works of art. ‘Old-fashioned’ may be taken here as meaning both ‘made in the past’ and ‘stylistically out of date’. Socrates says that Daedalus would be laughed at if he were to reappear in late-fifth-century BC Athens and start making ‘Daedalic’ statues. This does not mean that Socrates and his contemporaries found ‘Daedalic’ statues laughable. On the contrary: just as Pausanias tells us that he found ‘something divine’ (*entheos*) about a statue of Herakles attributed to Daedalus,²⁷ so there is evidence that classical Athenians venerated some patently archaic images. The statue of Athena Polias, evacuated to Salamis when the Persians sacked the Acropolis in 480 BC, was one such: Socrates would have witnessed the building of the Erechtheum (new, but significantly to be known as the *arkhaios naos*) to re-house the talismanic little olive-wood image, which remained the principal focus of the Panathenaic festival.²⁸

The veneration of ‘Daedalic’ (perhaps even pre-Hellenic) statues throughout the classical period is, of course, deducible from the numerous *xoana* encountered by Pausanias, particularly in the more recondite sanctuaries of the Peloponnese.²⁹ *Xoana* as described by Pausanias are typically executed in wood, with the head carved in some detail but the body essentially ‘columnar’, perhaps with just hands and feet indicated.³⁰ Writing in the third century AD, a Neoplatonist philosopher tells us that such archaic images were deemed ‘more divine’ than statues carved with greater skill (i.e. greater naturalistic detail).³¹ We have already seen that one fifth-century BC sculptor, Myron, could temper his drive towards naturalism when necessary: when required, that is, to produce a *xoanon*. Neoplatonic explanations apart, we can judge the function of these statues from scenes such as that depicted on an Attic red-figure vase of c. 430 BC, probably illustrating the rape of Cassandra (Figure 20.2): Cassandra is clutching, for sanctuary, a patently archaic *kouros*-style statue of Apollo.³² Apollo, given the circumstances of the story, is suitably impassive.

Then there is the melodrama within Aeschylus’ *Seven Against Thebes* (produced in 467 BC), where the chorus of Theban women appeals to the city’s statues—the *arkhaia brete*—for protection. These olden images are characterized by the women as if they formed a military detachment (*strateuma*) in defence of the *polis*. The Athenian audience of the play may well have remembered how the old *bretas*³³ of Athena had been removed from the Acropolis at the time of the Persian siege. Eteokles, the king of Thebes, overtly mixes his disparagement of the enlistment of statues with misogynistic sentiments: those hanging on to the images are typically feeble womankind (*gynaikeion genos*: see especially lines 175 and 245).

That Aeschylus should have dramatized popular (or feminine) faith in active statues is interesting. For it is Aeschylus who is cited by our Neoplatonist source as one who believed that art in the service of veneration should necessarily retain

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Figure 20.2 Attic red-figure amphora, by the Dwarf Painter. Reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum (BM Inv. E 336).

archaic qualities. The story is that Aeschylus, asked by the priesthood at Delphi to compose a paean for Apollo, referred them to another poet, Tynnikhos, who was a byword for hymns ancient rather than modern.³⁴ That Aeschylus should also have made Eteokles dismiss this sort of veneration as female foolishness is also interesting, because the episode in the *Seven Against Thebes* invites comparison with the many images from classical Greek art that show women—and women only, so far as I know—throwing themselves at the mercy of statues. There is no space for a catalogue here: one good example is on the East side of the frieze from Bassai (Figure 20.3), where a Lapith woman cleaves to an image of Artemis;³⁵ another, though poorly preserved, is the North 25 metope of the Parthenon, which appears to depict

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Figure 20.3 Part of the frieze from the Temple of Apollo at Bassai, c. 420 BC. Reproduced courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum.

the *Iliou Persis* event of Helen taking refuge from, and then re-captivating, Menelaus.³⁶

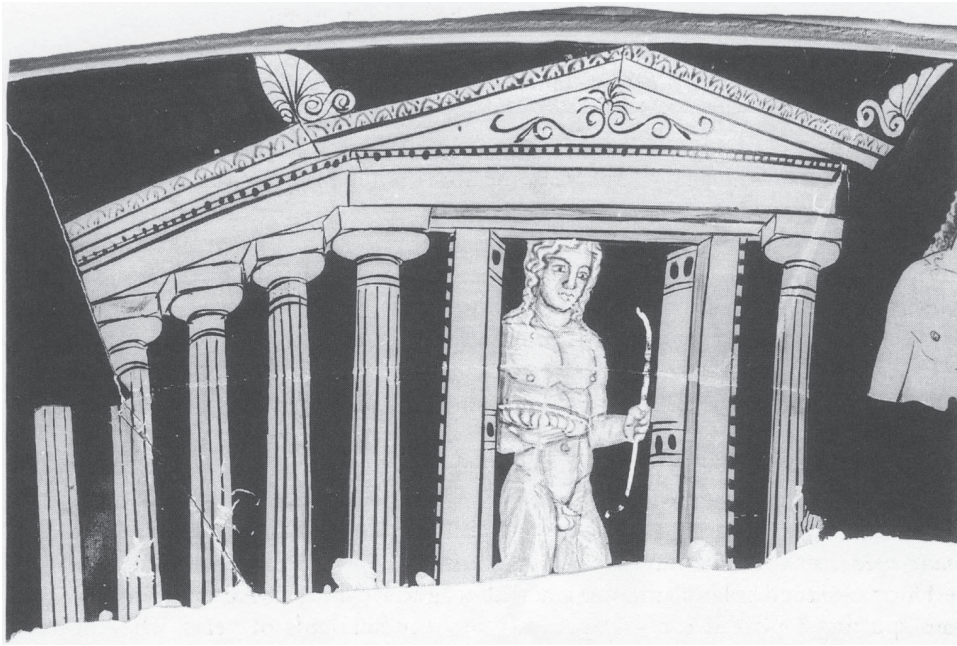
Conservatism in ritual practice is commonly attributed to female influence, but the preservation of archaic images in Greek society is more complex than that. For one thing, even if it is only women who seek refuge with statues (what else can they do, faced by heavily-armed men or drunken centaurs?), that does not demonstrate a purely female affection for archaic temple statues. It might be that, in the context of festivals like the Panathenaia, the role of curatorship for cult statues was largely allotted to women. But mythical paradigms would suggest that the faith in archaic images should not be engendered as exclusively feminine. The daring abduction of the Trojan Palladium, or its exemplary invigilation (depending on whether a mythographer is Greek or Roman) are both acts of male heroes.

The fact is that the archaic, or archaistic, is a presence not only in Greek temples, but at other key junctures of the Greek city. Literally ‘junctures’: at crossroads, on thresholds, archaically formal images provided changeless forms of orientation. *Xoana* were not the only category of statue to retain a ‘columnar’ form: in Athens, the Herms—rectangular shafts topped with a head of the god Hermes, and sometimes sporting a phallus too—stayed this way for hundreds of years. They never changed because their function of orientation required them to be stylistically fixed. Even those Herms attributed to ‘Great Masters’ of classical Greek sculpture, such as the Herm done by Alkamenes for the Propylaia, seem to have been essentially conformist.³⁷ The archaistic stylization of the Herms has been described as ‘an aggressive indicator

of difference':³⁸ but really it is no more than the reflection of a semiotic duty. The same motive for stylization applies to the Hekateia, the triple-faceted images of Hekate reckoned to have marked Athenian crossroads.³⁹

The factor of necessary schematism can be invoked reasonably enough for statues serving as signposts. But how can we explain the ambivalence of representation we encounter in other types of statuary? The force of this ambivalence belatedly surfaces in the thirtieth Fable of Babrius. A sculptor makes an image of Hermes and offers it for sale either as a grave-marker or an image of the god. Hermes himself is disturbed by this. 'Well,' he says to the sculptor, 'did you intend me to be corpse (*nekros*) or a god (*theos*)?' It is a moot point, whether Babrius—writing in the second century AD—has in mind an archaistic Herm or a more naturalistic Hermes. But perhaps there is a better illustration of this ambivalence on a fragmentary red-figure vase from Apulia, datable to the early fourth century BC (Figures 20.4–20.5). Here we have Apollo in his temple (Figure 20.4)—evidently a statue, archaic or archaizing, carrying the attributes of bow and patera: very like a surviving archaistic bronze statue, the Piraeus Apollo⁴⁰—and then, sitting outside the temple, another Apollo, inscribed as such, and plucking at his lyre (Figure 20.5).

This scene presents a conundrum. Will the real Apollo please announce himself? We are intended by the painter to make a stylistic contrast here: the Apollo inside the temple is an old statue (perhaps gilded: on the vase there is added yellow and white), done to the old formula; while the Apollo relaxing outside the temple with



Figures 20.4 and 20.5 Fragments of an Apulian calyx-krater, by the Painter of the Birth of Dionysus (note: figure 20.4 is to larger scale). Reproduced courtesy of the Allard Pierson Museum, Amsterdam (Inv. 2579).



Figure 20.5

his audience is a sligher, more effeminate and more ‘fashionable’ figure. What does the stylistic contrast mean in terms of belief in Apollo’s presence?

The easy way of answering that question is to quote Plato. A passage in the *Laus* (931a) declares: ‘Some of the gods whom we honour we see clearly [by which Plato means the stars], but of others we set up statues as images, and we believe that when we worship these, lifeless (*apsykbous*) though they be, the living gods (*empsykbous theous*) beyond feel great goodwill towards us and gratitude.’ Following this Platonic explanation, we could say that the Apulian vase-painter has attempted to show us both the lifeless representative of Apollo (the cult statue) and the ‘living’ Apollo, who is animated inasmuch as he is playing his lyre.

This is to credit the vase-painter with Platonic powers of theological discrimination. There is an alternative line to be tried. After all, the apparent duplication of Apollo on this vase may simply be a sign of his divinity. Some people believed the philosopher Pythagoras to be divine, precisely because he appeared to be able to be in two places at once.⁴¹ If this metaphysical gift were implied on the vase, there would then be no need to apply the rule that here the statue of Apollo shown inside the temple is to be understood as ‘lifeless’ (*apsykbous*), with the ‘living’ (*empsykbous*) god also indicated without the temple. Both figures contain what is understood as Apollo.

It is necessary to introduce this alternative in order to accommodate a good deal of evidence which shows that, at least in terms of popular belief, cult statues were regarded as properly vicarious. That is, the statues contained powers of response:

statues embodied will, personality, spirit. Our survey of the recourse to archaic cult figures implies as much: a statue of a divinity is treated as its presence or 'seat' (*bedos*). Those sculptors capable of catching or transmitting this presence were on that account perceived as semi-divine.⁴² It is tempting to treat this with scientific disdain. By various devices and implants, statues could be made to sweat and to weep: priestly manipulation seems flagrant, in retrospect.⁴³ And when one reads about the flogging spectacle at the Spartan altar of Artemis Orthia—the whippings were supervised by a priestess holding a small wooden *xoanon* of Artemis, which allegedly grew heavy if the flogging got light⁴⁴—the inclination to dismiss it all as chicanery is almost irresistible. And yet the function of statues as Greek deities incarnate demands serious attention. As we have seen, some classical Greeks reckoned archaic images to be, on the grounds of archaic appearance, venerable images. It might then be asked: why were all cult statues not done to that archaic formula?

The resources for answering this question tend not to be very satisfactory. Hack defenders of idolatry, such as Maximus of Tyre, have been over-used.⁴⁵ The fullest explanation of a sculptor's motives is fairly anachronistic: in his *Olympian Discourse* of AD 97, the rhetorician Dio Chrysostom stages an imaginary defence of the Olympian Zeus by Pheidias, in which the artist is asked to argue the case for androcentrism in his statue. The imagined defence goes like this: we need, says Pheidias, closer contact with the gods than simply gazing at the skies; it is the Greek nature to conceive of their gods in mortal guise (from Homer onwards); my statue is not trying to deceive you that Zeus is man (you would have to be mad, *maneis*, to take it that way); Zeus is many-faceted—and the best a sculptor can do is try to reflect some of those mortal-conceived facets (*Pater*, *Basileus*, etc.); no sculptor will ever capture thunder and lightning; and, finally, Zeus will not frown on attempts at his representation: for Zeus, as Pindar has it, is the supreme technician (*megasthenes aristotekbna pater*).

How far this corresponds to classical Greek reasoning is hard to judge. Likewise, we can only guess that the motive for making cult statues chryselephantine rather than plain wooden may have been as Maximus of Tyre claimed: that is, to honour the gods by using 'what is most beautiful on earth, in purity of raw materials, in human shape and in artistic precision'.⁴⁶ But we can construct a myth-laden mentality in which any differences between images of the mortal and images of the immortal are utterly blurred. Heroized mortals are located in this cognitive area, which is as ill defined stylistically as it is philosophically: hence the 'godlike' (*isotheos*) nature of the *kouros*-type statue, and the scholarly problems of determining whether this or that *kouros* is to be categorized as 'divine' or 'human'.⁴⁷ Hovering in the same imprecise mental territory are the *kolossoi*, understood originally not as gigantic images but as *doppelgänger* or 'doubles' of the person they were made to represent and commemorate.⁴⁸ Here too are the many statues dedicated as votives in temple precincts, where pure proximity to the temple seems to have qualified the honorand as a 'lodger' (*synoikos*) in divine quarters.⁴⁹ To attempt to separate 'divine' from 'human' in these cases is probably a misguided enterprise: one suspects that the ambivalence was always intended.

Describing this ambivalence as 'myth-laden' means that we encounter legendary instances of a two-way process. Men—Daedalus, the Telkhines—make images of

gods; and gods make images of men. Hence the repair job carried out on Pelops; and hence Pandora, a terracotta creation devised by Zeus and executed by Hephaistos. 'Artifact and artifice herself, Pandora installs the woman as *eidolon* in the frame of human culture, equipped...to delight and deceive.'⁵⁰ This feminist reading of the myth incorporates a sentiment full of importance for an understanding of Greek art: '*to delight and deceive*' might have been the motto of many classical Greek painters and sculptors, from Daedalus to Myron and onwards. Just as Daedalus assisted his Cretan patrons by making a mobile cow for the deception of Pasiphae,⁵¹ so Myron delighted his Athenian patrons with a cow so lifelike that you might try to milk it. For it was the nature of anthropomorphic belief—which, as Alain Schnapp has shown, the Greeks considered as a measure of civilized behaviour⁵²—that inevitably allowed the makers of cult statues to abandon schematic or archaic forms, and work instead to the twin and mutually dependent ideals of delight and deception. And what we call 'the Greek Revolution' may ultimately be owed to an essentially *religious* impulse.

There is an obvious example of this. Zeus ordered Hephaistos to endow Pandora with 'the lovely figure of a girl' (*parthenikes kalon eidos eperaton*: Hesiod *Works and Days* 63). When Greek sculptors made statues for the sanctuaries of Aphrodite, they were acting on similar instructions. No deity better illustrates the charms and dangers of anthropomorphism than Aphrodite. It is true that her sanctuaries around the Mediterranean included a variety of cult objects: at Paphos, on Cyprus, the legend of the goddess' birth sustained an enduring fetish for a large meteorite or betyl-stone, vaguely phallic in shape, but categorized as an aniconic focus of veneration. There was nothing aniconic, though, about the statues of Aphrodite that became celebrated from the late fourth century BC onwards. To depict the goddess naked was a departure from archaic (and indeed fifth century BC) practice: but when Farnell suggests that the development 'may have occurred quite naturally and spontaneously to the Greek artists of the fourth century',⁵³ he rightly minimizes the shock value of this representation. The aesthetic of divine-human ambivalence would naturally demand an erotic statue of Aphrodite: if she was president of sanctuaries at which 'sacred prostitution' (*hieros gamos*) was provided by her vicars (*hierodouloi*), then statues of Aphrodite looking like a *hierodoulos*, or even a *hetaira*, logically follow.

Praxiteles, so the stories relate,⁵⁴ did a naked Aphrodite, which was spurned by the people of Kos and accepted by the people of Knidos. The model for the statue was the sculptor's mistress, Phryne; and it soon became a great attraction, bringing tourists by the boatload (*quam ut viderent multi navigerunt Cnidum*). It features in the *Greek Anthology* rather like Myron's heifer. 'Perchance Olympus is bereaved since the Paphian has descended to Knidos'; 'Where did Praxiteles see me naked?', and so on.⁵⁵ But amongst these predictable reactions, we may note a peculiar consequence of religious anthropomorphism and artistic naturalism combined 'to delight and deceive'. Pseudo-Lucian, in his *Erotes* XI, gives an amusing (and amused) account of touristic responses to the Knidian Aphrodite. He and his companions are allowed to view it from the rear, and are told by the priestess that the stains on the statue's bottom are not defects of the marble, but relics of a passion conceived for the image by some hapless youth.

It is a grotesque story, but not unique. The phenomenon of people falling for

statues is documented in other sources. Devotees pick statues from their bases and retire with them for intercourse: and they get away with it. In one case reported from Delphi, a pilgrim (*theoros*) to the sanctuary takes a fancy to a *kouros*, and locks himself away with it, 'leaving behind him a wreath as the price of the intercourse'. Apollo tells the Delphic priesthood not to punish the man: a wreath was sufficient payment.⁵⁶

The literary circumstances of this tale make it clear that such behaviour was regarded as bizarre (*para phusin*): the instances of humano-lithic copulation are immediately followed by examples of passions between humans and various fauna. But we should be sympathetic to such extraordinary couplings, given the place of statues in Greek society. The truth is that the distance between the 'animate' and 'inanimate' was always being narrowed: by myths, by figures of speech, by cult practices—and by art.

Thus: Pheidias made his Olympic Zeus with an ivory torso; and when the gods put Olympic Pelops back together again, they gave him an ivory shoulder. Pandora, the first mortal woman, was made of terracotta; and the most accessible images of deities to be bought at sanctuaries were statuettes of terracotta. Immortals were deathless (*athanatos*); and statues of deceased mortals rendered the honorands as ageless (*ageraos*). Athletes were likened to statues: sometimes because their bodies gleamed like marble, sometimes because they were dumb as stone—but either way, they were statuesque; and statues of athletes proliferated in most cities of classical Greece. Some cities staged beauty contests; and one way of expressing physical beauty in Greek is *agalmatias*, 'statue-like'. Pythagoras—he who could duplicate himself—once got up in the theatre at Olympia, and demonstrated that his thigh was made of gold. Statues took the best of human ingenuity to make; but a tree festooned with masks and garlands could serve.⁵⁷

Statues were very numerous in Athens when St Paul visited, in the first century AD. Paul described the city as *kateidolos*: 'a forest of idols'.⁵⁸ The city was probably exactly like that—a forest of idols—when it was perambulated by Sophocles and Socrates. Growing up in such a forest, it is hardly surprising that the classical Athenian poets and philosophers tell us so little about the statues surrounding them. Why should they bother to distinguish the wood from the trees, in this forest of statues? It was always there. We—the modern students, admirers and collectors of Greek art—too easily forget this simple fact of circumstance. Statues, to the Greeks, were second nature.

NOTES

The quotation from Diderot comes from the opening exchanges of his 1769 dialogue, *La Rêve de D'Alembert* (*D'Alembert's Dream*).

- 1 From the Loeb edition and translation by W.R.Paton, Vol. III, nos. 713–42. See also D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images* (Chicago, 1989), 292, and O.Fuà, 'L'idea dell'opera d'arte "vivente" e la bucula di Mirone nell'epigramma greco e latino', *RCCM* 15 (1973), 49–55 (a useful assemblage of philological comparanda). As Simon Goldhill points

- out in his contribution to S.Goldhill and R.Osborne (eds), *Art and Text*, Cambridge, 1994, 197–223, all that these epigrams achieve is a dramatization of response: none of them actually *describes* Myron's work.
- 2 For an example, and citation and discussion of others, see J.G.Frazer's Commentary on his own translation of Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (London, 1989), Vol. III, 336–7.
 - 3 The reasons for statues wanting to move are manifold. The case described in Plutarch, *Alexander* 24 is typically odd. Note, however, an alternative explanation of the fetters seen by Pausanias: that is, that they were 'purificatory' bindings. See F.Brommer, 'Beiträge zur griechischen Bildhauergeschichte', *MDAI* 3 (1950), 80–1.
 - 4 E.R.Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951), 136.
 - 5 Thus in J.D.Beazley and B.Ashmole, *Greek Sculpture and Painting* (Cambridge, 1932), 36, Myron is described as 'a master of movement'; in S.Woodford, *An Introduction to Greek Art* (London, 1986), 89, we are told, regarding a copy of Myron's Diskobolos, that 'the suggestion of potential movement is so strong that the figure seems permeated with energy.' For characterization of the 'Severe Style', see B.S.Ridgway, *The Severe Style in Greek Sculpture* (Princeton, 1970), 3–11.
 - 6 H.-G.Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London, 1975). A workable summary of Gadamer's prolix thesis may be found in J.Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (London, 1981), 99–102.
 - 7 Pliny's milieu and motives, and the background of Roman aristocratic *avaritia*, are fully discussed in J.Isager, *Pliny on Art and Society* (London, 1991).
 - 8 Using the phraseology of Paul Veyne, i.e. the subtitle of his *Did the Greeks Believe in their Myths?* (Chicago, 1988).
 - 9 Admittedly the lyrics quoted are not absolutely up to date. But see M.Warner, *Monuments and Maidens* (London, 1985), 213.
 - 10 Demosthenes, *De Corona* 129.
 - 11 A point thoroughly argued by R.Osborne, in 'The viewing and obscuring of the Parthenon Frieze', *JHS* 107 (1987), 98–105.
 - 12 See P.E.Corbett, 'Greek temples and Greek worshippers: the literary and archaeological evidence', *BICS* 17 (1970), 149–58.
 - 13 E.H.Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (12th edn, London, 1972), 48–9.
 - 14 'The old prescription': Gombrich, op.cit., 48; 'avoiding movement': W.Stevenson-Smith, *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Egypt* (Harmondsworth, 1958), 4; 'fixed axes', 'law of frontality': H.Schafer, *Principles of Egyptian Art* (ed. E.Brunner Traut, Oxford, 1974), 311–12.
 - 15 *Laws* 656e, trans. Taylor. For further commentary on this, see E.H.Gombrich, *Art and Illusion* (4th edn, London, 1972), 107ff.
 - 16 *Meno* 97d, trans. Jowett. Cf. *Euthyphro* 11b–c.
 - 17 Pliny, *Natural History* 36.4.32 mentions the group, though fails to mention the philosophical distinction of its sculptor. Cf. Pausanias IX.35.7.
 - 18 *Hippias Major* 282a, trans. Jowett.
 - 19 Pausanias II.30.2.
 - 20 The fragment comes from *Theoroi e Isthmiastai*. For text, translation and discussion, see H.Lloyd-Jones' Appendix to Vol. II of the Loeb Aeschylus (1963 edition), esp. 547ff.
 - 21 Aristotle, *De Anima* 406b18–19. Cf. J.M.Edmonds, *Fragments of Attic Comedy*, Vol. II (Leiden, 1959), 17, 93.

- 22 Callistratus is sceptical about Daedalus, ‘the marvel’ (*thauma*) from Crete. His eighth *Ekphrasis* is not concerned with a work of Daedalus, but a statue of Dionysus by Praxiteles, which was, according to Callistratus, much more delicately ‘alive’ (*zotikos*).
 23 Olympian VII, lines 52ff., in particular:

ἔργα δὲ ζωοῖσιν ἐρπόντεσσι θ’ ὁμοῖα κέλευθοι φέρον·
 ἦν δὲ κλέος βαθύ.

There is no doubt that Pindar intends us, in line 52, to take the early Rhodian statues as ‘alive’ (hence *zooisin*); but *keleuthoi pheron* is variously rendered as ‘set up in the streets’ (Gildersleeve) and ‘used to move about the streets’ (Disson). Disson’s reading is spurned by most subsequent commentators (one exception is Verdenius: see W.J. Verdenius, *Commentaries on Pindar*, Vol. 1 (Leiden, 1987), 71); but it is not inconsonant with the *topos* that Pindar is here employing. ‘For on their roads run the semblances of beasts and creeping things’ (Myers) seems excessively grotesque.

- 24 *Politics* 1253b33.
 25 *Iliad* XVIII. 376.
 26 For a survey and discussion of these anecdotes, see E. Kris and O. Kurz, *Legend, Myth and Magic in the Image of the Artist* (Yale, 1979), 61–90.
 27 Pausanias II.4.5.
 28 See J.H. Kroll, ‘The ancient image of Athena Polias’, in *Hesperia* Supplement 20—Studies for Homer Thompson (Princeton, 1982), 65–76. Kroll deduces that the statue was a simple standing image which must have looked particularly modest once the chryselephantine Athena Parthenos was up: which may account for the glamorizing gold ornaments apparently added to Athena Polias in the early fourth century BC. On the perceived antiquity of the figure, see Pausanias I.26.6 and Plutarch, *Moralia* fr. 158.
 29 The clearest description of a *xoanon* in Pausanias pertains to an image of Apollo he saw at Amyklai, near Sparta: Pausanias III.19.1. Frazer’s *Commentary* Vol. 2, 69, is (as usual) worth consulting.
 30 For an extensive survey of the literary testimonia regarding *xoana*, see A. Donohue, *Xoana and the Origins of Greek Sculpture* (Atlanta, 1988). On their archaeological aspects: I.B. Romano, ‘Early Greek cult images and cult practices’, in R. Hägg, N. Marinatos and G. Nordquist (eds), *Early Greek Cult Practice* (Stockholm, 1988), 127–34. On their execution and appearance: S. Casson, *The Technique of Early Greek Sculpture* (Oxford, 1933), 55ff. The vase featured in Casson’s Fig. 21 is in Ferrara Archaeological Museum: inv. T 127.
 31 Porphyry, *De Abstinencia* 2.18. On Porphyry’s *apologia* for images, see E. Bevan, *Holy Images* (London, 1940), 74–5. For an alternative view, compare Tertullian’s typically astringent summary of the Athena Polias statue as a ‘stark pole’, an ‘unworked log’—although the unlikely likeness to the Christian cross is not missed (Tertullian, *Apologeticus* 16.3.8).
 32 Most artists show Cassandra clutching an image of Athena: for a range of examples from South Italian vase-painters, see J.-M. Moret, *L’Ilioupersis dans la céramique italienne* (Institut Suisse de Rome, 1975), 9–27. On this exception, see J. Davreux, *La légende de la prophétesse Cassandre* (Paris, 1942), 208. J.D. Beazley, in *Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters* 2nd edn Vol. II (Oxford, 1963), 1010, takes the subject to be Menelaos and Helen. But there is no suggestion of erotic reconciliation here: Cassandra is more likely.

- 33 'A thorough study of Greek words for statues is badly needed' (A. Donohue, *op. cit.*, 235). The distinction between a *bretas* and a *xoanon* is not clear: *bretas* is used elsewhere by Aeschylus, and also by Euripides (*Alceste* 974), and may simply be a poetic synonym of *xoanon*. See the discussion of this by E. Benveniste in *Revue Philologique* 1932, esp. 128ff.
- 34 See again Porphyry, *De Abstinencia* 2.18; and cf. Plato, *Ion* 534d. See also A. H. Borbein, 'Tendenzen der Stilgeschichte der bildenden Kunst und politisch-soziale Entwicklungen zwischen Kleisthenes und Perikles', in W. Schuller, W. Hoepfner and E.-L. Schwandner (eds), *Demokratie und Architektur* (Munich, 1989), 91–108.
- 35 Section H4–524 of the frieze: see C. Hoffkes-Brukker, *Der Bassai-Fries* (Munich, 1975), 54–5.
- 36 See F. Brommer, *Die Metopen des Parthenon* (Mainz, 1967), 50 (Plates 105–10).
- 37 The original of Alkamenes' Hermes Propylaios has not survived, but copies indicate that it can have varied only in nuances from the normal type. See C. Walston, *Alkamenes* (Cambridge, 1926), 153–7; and B. S. Ridgway, *The Archaic Style in Greek Sculpture* (Princeton, 1977), 318.
- 38 'The herm emphatically asserts its refusal to go along with the developments of free-standing dedicatory figures.' 'The herm thus condemns itself to be belated, it declines both the challenge of the here and now...and the challenge of creating a visual and visible sign that captures what sight can never see, as Myron does in the Diskobolos.' Citations from R. Osborne, 'The erection and mutilation of the Hermai', *PCPS* 31 (1985), 47–73.
- 39 For examples of these, and also a number of archaizing Herms, see E. B. Harrison, *Agora XI: Archaic and Archaistic Sculpture* (Princeton, 1965), 86ff.
- 40 Illustrated in J. Boardman, *Greek Sculpture: The Archaic Period* (London, 1978), fig. 150.
- 41 Aristotle Fr. 191, reported in Aelian, *Varia Historia* II. 26.
- 42 Hence the tradition of attributing *enthousiasmos*, or 'divine ecstasy', to artists. The concept of *deus artifex* is a complex one, especially given the banausic status of Greek sculptors: see Kris and Kurz, *op. cit.* (Note 26), 38ff.
- 43 See F. Poulsen, 'Talking, weeping and bleeding statues', *Acta Archaeologica* 16 (1945), 178–95.
- 44 Pausanias III.16.11.
- 45 E.g. by Alain Schnapp, in his 'Why did the Greeks need images?', in T. Melander and J. Christiansen (eds), *Proceedings of the Third International Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery* (Copenhagen, 1988), 566–74. For the context and nature of Maximus, see C. Clerc, *Les théories relatives au culte des images chez les auteurs grecs du II^e siècle après J.-C.* (Paris, 1915), 230ff.
- 46 Maximus of Tyre, Oration II.3 (Hobein): ἄλλα τὸ μὲν Ἑλληνικὸν τιμᾶν τοὺς θεοὺς ἐνόμισαν τῶν ἐν γῇ τοῖς καλλίστοις, ὕλη μὲν καθαρά, μορφῇ δὲ ἀνθρωπίνη, τέχνῃ δὲ ἀκριβεῖ.
- 47 The most accessible introduction to the debate on the significance of the *kouroi* is Andrew Stewart's essay, 'When is a kouros not an Apollo? The Tenea "Apollo" revisited', in M. del Chiaro (ed.), *Corinthiaca* (Missouri, 1986), 54–70.
- 48 See J.-P. Vernant, *Myth and Thought among the Greeks* (London, 1983), 305–20. Vernant's point of departure is the definition of *kolossos* established by Benveniste (see Note 33).
- 49 On the range of possible meanings of statues at sanctuaries, see M. Robertson in P. E. Easterling and J. V. Muir (eds), *Greek Religion and Society* (Cambridge, 1985), 162ff.

- 50 Froma Zeitlin, approvingly quoted by Marina Warner, *op.cit.* (Note 9), 216. For the context, see F.I.Zeitlin, 'The dynamics of misogyny: myth and mythmaking in the *Oresteia*', *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 149–84.
- 51 See Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* III.xv.8 (using J.G.Frazer's Loeb edition).
- 52 See Schnapp, *op.cit.* (Note 45). The comments of Herodotus on Persian practices (I.131) are particularly valuable for what they tell us about Greek self-definition in this respect.
- 53 L.R.Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States*, Vol. II (Oxford, 1896), 672.
- 54 Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* XXXVI.20.
- 55 Using the Loeb edition, Vol. V: see nos. 159–70.
- 56 Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* XIII, 606. The story related by Pausanias about Theagenes (VI.11.2) is not quite comparable: it is a display of prodigal juvenile strength that Theagenes displays, not erotic compulsion.
- 57 Immortality of mortals: see J.-P.Vernant, 'La belle mort et le cadavre outragé', in G.Gnoli and J.-P.Vernant (eds), *La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes* (Cambridge, 1982), 44–76. Gleaming athletes: Plutarch, *Moralia* 133d. Pythagoras' golden thigh: G.S.Kirk, J.E.Raven and M.Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 2nd edn (Cambridge, 1983), 228; also Plutarch, *Numa*, 8; and cf. Herodotus IV.26, for golden skulls. Athlete statues: W.J. Raschke, 'Images of victory', in W.J.Raschke (ed.), *The Archaeology of the Olympics* (Wisconsin, 1988), 38–54. Beauty (*euandria*) contests: N.B.Crowther, 'Male Beauty Contests in Greece: the euandria and euexia', *AC* 54 (1985), 285–91; and J.Neils *et al.* *Goddess and Polis: The Panathenaic Festival in Ancient Athens* (Princeton, 1992), 95–6. *Agalmatias*: a late usage, admittedly—Philostratus, *Vitae Sophistarum*, 612. Tree-statues at the Lenaia festival: A.Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (Revised edn, Oxford, 1968), 30–4.
- 58 *Acts (Praxeis)* XVII. 16. For the translation of *kateidolon...polin* see R.E.Wycherley's note, *JThS* 19 (1968), 619–20.

FURTHER READING

David Freedberg's *The Power of Images* (Chicago, 1989) is not bound by classical limits, but is full of references useful to the student of Greek art. An earlier and less comprehensive study is also worth consulting: Edwyn Bevan's *Holy Images* (London, 1940). Non-archaeological, but handy for the religious background, is C.Faraone, *Talismans and Trojan Horses* (Oxford, 1992). An erratic but vigorous case for putting Greek art into the context of its social (and mainly sacred) background is made by R.L.Gordon, in 'The real and the imaginary: production and religion in the Greco-Roman world', *Art History* 2.1 (1979), 5–34. For the latest on Daedalus, see Sarah Morris, *Daedalus and the Origins of Greek Art* (Princeton, 1992), esp. 215ff. For 'the Greek Revolution', Mary Beard's 'Reflections on reflections on the Greek Revolution', in *Archaeological Review from Cambridge* 4.2 (1985) is stimulating. Evelyn Harrison's *Agora XI* volume contains the best discussion of the 'archaic' and 'archaistic' in Greek sculpture; see also D.Willers, *Zu den Anfängen der archaistischen Plastik in Griechenland* (Berlin, 1975).

For illustrations and documentation of Greek statuary of the period discussed, John Boardman's *Greek Sculpture: The Classical Period* (London, 1985) is handy; see also the relevant parts of A.F.Stewart, *Greek Sculpture* (Yale, 1990).

PART IV

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY



GREEK SACRIFICE

Forms and functions



A.M.Bowie

Anyone who turns from collecting evidence about Greek sacrifice to the prescriptions laid down in the Pentateuch cannot but be struck by the great difference in the *variety* of forms of sacrifice exhibited by the Greek peoples as against the Jewish.¹ There are few if any significant areas of Greek life in which sacrifice is not found. In a single city, scarcely a day went by without one or more sacrifices taking place in one cult or other, public or private; virtually all meat consumed was ritually slain. One has only to look at the many ritual calendars that have survived to see the density of sacrifice. Furthermore, the range of animals sacrificed was also very great: in general, Greece had no 'unclean' animals, but certain animals would be forbidden at certain cults. Fish² and to a lesser extent birds³ are not very common, but this still left boars, rams, goats, bulls, oxen, cows, deer, horses (rarely), lambs, ewes, pigs, puppies and so on. This chapter will attempt to provide a guide through the maze that is Greek sacrifice. I shall say something about the basic procedures and then consider some of the more distinctive variations, to show how Greek sacrifices articulated and were articulated by aspects of Greek culture. In the space available, the account must be very selective: there is almost no general statement about Greek sacrifice that cannot be qualified by a contrary example. Furthermore, the attempt to explain the 'meaning' of religious activities is beset with problems:⁴ the meaning an anthropologist gives may make sense to him in terms of Greek sacrifice as a whole, but it need not correspond to its meaning for the participants themselves; one has only to look at the many and varied explanations that the Romans gave for their religious rites to see the nature of the problem.⁵ I shall also be forced to draw on evidence from a wide chronological span. Finally, there is an element of artificiality in talking of sacrifice in isolation from other ritual activities, since it was only one way of making gifts to and contact with the gods. Although we shall be largely concerned with blood-sacrifice, therefore, we must also consider rites in their entirety, since the meaning of blood-sacrifice is often generated by its relation to other forms of offering.⁶

The reasons for the difference between Greece and Israel are instructive since they concern the roles which sacrifice may play in a particular society. In the Pentateuch, the prescriptions have, at least in part, been standardized, to exclude such things as historical and local variety, excessively Canaanite practices or the confusion wrought when 'every man did that which was right in his own eyes'.⁷ The

clear prescription of sacrificial practice was a central part of Jewish self-definition. The great variety of Greek sacrificial practice is also in part a product of the fissiparous nature of the Greek world.⁸ If it was the covenant that created the religious community of the Jews, sacrifice was one of the most important ways in which the Greeks expressed their sense of community: in Athens, certain crimes meant not only loss of political rights (*atimia*) but also exclusion from religious rites.⁹ Furthermore, Athenians abroad would conduct the same rites as they had at home.¹⁰ The fact that Greece consisted of many city-states of varying political hues, racial origins and degrees of outside influence meant the range of sacrificial practice was considerable. There were festivals such as the great Panhellenic games at Olympia and elsewhere, or the Eleusinian Mysteries, in which a kind of unity was evinced and which could be appealed to in political debate,¹¹ but these were run by local officials, not people elected by the Greeks as a whole. At the same time, although sacrificial practice varied from place to place, providing sacrificial victims for a common festival could mark membership of a political grouping;¹² allies¹³ or villages¹⁴ could be instructed to send victims as a sign of submission and belonging, and the failure of a colony to give rights to men from the mother-city could lead to conflict.¹⁵ Sharing equally in joint sacrifices could be a means of healing a long-standing dispute between two groups of related persons, such as the Salaminioi in Athens.¹⁶ Sacrificial privileges could be granted by one state to another as a sign of a special relationship.¹⁷

Rather than beginning with a composite picture of a Greek sacrifice drawn from various pieces of evidence,¹⁸ let us first take one of the fuller official prescriptions. The following regulation was promulgated in Cos for the sacrifice to Zeus Polieus:¹⁹

The heralds lead the bull chosen for Zeus into the agora; when they are in the agora, the one whose bull it is, or another ἐνδεξιως person [?propitious, ?standing on his right] on his behalf, says 'I provide this bull for the people of Cos; let the people of Cos pay the price to Hestia here'. The *Prostatatai*, having sworn an oath, are forthwith to value it, and when it is valued, the herald is to announce how much it is valued at. From there they drive it before Hestia Hetaireia and sacrifice it. The priest garlands it and pours a libation of a cup of mixed wine before the bull. Then they bring the bull and the pig and seven cakes and honey and a garland. When they have brought it out, they call for holy silence. There, having bound the bull, they begin the sacrifice with a branch and laurel. The [?heralds] offer (καρπῶντι)²⁰ the pig and the *splankhna* in the fire on the altar, pouring a libation of *melikraton* [honey and milk]; the *entera* they wash and burn by the altar. When they are offered without wine (ἄποτα), let him pour over *melikraton*. The herald is to announce that the yearly feast of Zeus Polieus is being celebrated at the correct time. The priest is to offer over the *entera* sweetmeats and cakes and libations [...] and mixed wine and a garland.

This inscription reflects a number of standard features of Greek sacrifice. It makes plain how the sacrifice is a matter for the whole community, involving as it does a procession to an altar in the agora, the centre of the city. Care is taken over the choice of animal: as often, the beasts for sacrifice are checked for suitability in a *dokimasia*, and a brand placed on them.²¹ The animal is garlanded; sometimes the

horns were gilded. Different parts of the beast receive different treatment. Normally, there was a threefold distinction: the *splankbna*, heart, lungs, liver, kidneys, were roasted and consumed by the innermost circle of sacrificers, often also important people in the state (status is shown by proximity to the death of the beast); the *entera*, the digestive organs, being inedible, were burned for the gods with thigh-bones and fat; the flesh formed the main part of the sacrificial meal. As usual, cakes are offered along with the blood-sacrifice, and wine is poured over the burning meats.

At the same time, there is much that the inscription does not mention, presumably because it was standard practice. We do not hear of the basket carried, perhaps by a young woman, in which the sacrificial knife was hidden under the grains of barley that were thrown over the beast before it was killed. We must imagine water for purification (into which a torch was dipped to sprinkle altar and celebrants),²² incense and musicians, often flute-players. The water was also used to make the victim nod its head, as if in agreement to its own death.²³ The officiants were dressed specially: another Coan inscription prescribes a purple *khiton*, a gold ring and a flourishing garland.²⁴ Just before the killing, a few hairs were cut from the beast's head. Small animals were killed after being lifted over the altar; bulls were first struck with an axe and then had their neck-artery cut with the knife. The blood was collected and splashed on the altar. The animal was then skinned (the skin would often go to the priest or sanctuary)²⁵ and butchered.²⁶ The meat was then cooked, usually by boiling,²⁷ and distributed.

The oddity about this process, as the Greeks themselves were aware, is that the gods, in whose honour it is carried out, get the least attractive portion. Hesiod gives an aetiology for this.²⁸ When gods and men 'were coming to a settlement' at Mekone, Prometheus carved up an ox and presented it so that the edible meat and entrails were hidden in the skin and covered with the stomach, while the bones were hidden in rich fat. Asked to choose, Zeus, permitting himself to be taken in, took the apparently more attractive portion, thus for ever leaving man with the more edible parts: he did however exact revenge for the trick, by hiding corn in the earth and creating Pandora, the first woman.

Vernant has shown how much more can be made of this myth.²⁹ In the differentiation of the parts of the animal it marks the absolute distinction between gods and men: previously, men and gods lived and dined together, but now communication, though still maintained through food, is possible only at a distance.³⁰ Man and god have their individual parts, and the *splankbna* occupy a kind of intermediate status: they are internal parts like the digestive organs given to the gods, but consumed by the men like the flesh. They stand therefore where the portions of gods and men conjoin, and indeed the liver was inspected to see whether the sacrifice was acceptable to the gods.³¹ The difference between the conditions of men and gods is graphically portrayed by Vernant: men consume the flesh of a lifeless beast in the endless attempt to stave off hunger, while the gods receive the incorruptible bones and those parts which, like the soul, escape death in the flames and mount along with the savour of the incense to the heavens.³² Man is also separated from the beasts in that he eats the foods found in the sacrifice, meat and cultivated, cooked corn, rather than wild grasses or his own kind as do the animals.

Greek sacrifice did not only distinguish god from man or animal; it could mark a

range of significant oppositions. First, there is that between Olympian and chthonic deities, or the Olympian and chthonic aspects of the same deity. The Olympians are approached with garlands and festive clothing by day, the heroes and dead in mourning and lamentation, with the hair untied, by night. The gods usually have white victims, the heroes black, the former shared between god and man, the latter often burned whole.³³ The language used for each is different: *hiereuein*, 'to consecrate', *thuein*, literally 'to fumigate', for the gods, as against *enbagizein*, 'to make holy', and *entemnein*, 'to cut into (the fire)' for heroes; libations are poured as *spondai* to the gods, as *khoai* to the heroes.³⁴ The gods live in the sky, the heroes underground, so the gods' altar is built up with stones, while the heroes have an *eschara*, flat hearth, or *bothros*, pit; the gods' temple is raised on steps, the heroes' shrine is often more like a house; for the gods the victim's head is pulled back so that the throat points to the sky and the blood splashes on the standing altar, for the heroes, the blood is poured into a channel in the ground. This downward movement of sacrifice is enacted literally in those rites where victims were cast into water. Live bulls were sunk at Syracuse³⁵ and slaughtered piglets put into pits during the Thesmophoria at Athens to commemorate Persephone's descent to Hades;³⁶ 'the Argives summon [Dionysus] from the water with trumpets and throw into the *abyssos* [a lake] lambs to the "Gatekeeper"; they hide their trumpets in thyrsi.'³⁷

These distinctions are illustrated also in the sacrifices to figures who occupy an intermediate status between god and hero, such as Herakles:³⁸

they say that Phaistos, coming to Sikyon, found the people offering (*enbagizein*) to Herakles as to a hero: he would do nothing of the sort, but insisted on sacrificing (*thuein*) to Herakles as to a god. And to this day the Sikyonians, after slaying a lamb (*sphaxantes*) and burning the thighs on the altar, eat part of the flesh as of a regular sacrificial victim, and offer part of the flesh as to a hero.³⁹

Compare the rites for the god-hero pairing at the tomb of Hyakinthos at Amyklai:⁴⁰

the pedestal of the image [of Apollo] is in the form of an altar, and they say that Hyacinth is buried in it; and at the Hyacinthian festival, before sacrificing (*thusiai*) to Apollo, they bring a sacrifice (*enbagizein*) for Hyacinth, as for a hero, into this altar through a bronze door.

The differences in sacrifice to gods in their chthonic rather than Olympian aspects are graphically displayed in the rites of Demeter Khthonia at Hermione in the Argolid.⁴¹ In the procession a cow, 'fastened with cords,⁴² but still wild and frisky', is led to the temple and released into it; the doors are closed.

Four old women remain inside: it is they who butcher the cow. Whichever of them gets the chance cuts the beast's throat with a sickle. Then the doors are opened, and the men whose business it is drive up a second cow, and after it a third, and then a fourth. The old women butcher them all in the same way. Another odd thing about the sacrifice is this: on whichever side the first cow falls, all must fall.... Inside the temple there are chairs on which the old women await the cows as they are driven in one by one.

The reversals here are a structuralist's delight. It is unusual, if not almost unknown, for women to do the actual cutting of the throat. The act of killing is not a solemn blow with an axe or a knife, but a frenetic attempt to slash the throat with a sickle, normally used to cut corn. The requirement that all the cows should fall on the same side is also strange. Finally, sacrifice within the confines of the shrine is contrary to the normal open-air rite at an altar in front of the temple.

The important role of the women in this rite shows how Greek men distinguished also between themselves and women through sacrificial practices. Though young and adolescent girls and mature and old women regularly held religious office and priesthoods, they were in general not permitted to involve themselves in politics or blood sacrifice. Even at the Thesmophoria, a widespread festival giving women the right to occupy areas of public life normally reserved for men, a male *mageiros* probably performed the actual killing.⁴³ It is only in such disordered societies as the Amazons that women are to be found conducting blood-sacrifices.⁴⁴

The Thesmophoria did however acknowledge women's importance to the state by giving them political and sacrificial roles to promote 'the generation of crops and the procreation of mankind'.⁴⁵ At Athens, the lawcourts and the assembly did not sit, so that the women gathered at the Thesmophorion on the Pnyx, where the assembly normally met, were symbolically replacing the men at the centre of the city. On the first day, the remains of piglets deposited there some time before the festival were brought up from underground chambers and placed on the altars later to be mixed with the seed-corn to fertilize the fields. The second day, *Nesteia* ('Fasting'), imitated Demeter's grief at the loss of Persephone and the consequent infertility that covered the earth. The final day, *Kalligeneia* ('Fair Birth'), celebrated Persephone's return, and normal life and sacrifice was restored as rotten carcasses, marking this marginal period of female 'domination', gave way to cooked food.

Sacrifice was used also to mark out other relationships in the *polis*. A fundamental feature of sacrifice was that the equality of the citizens was mirrored in the equal distribution of the parts of the animal.⁴⁶ This might be effected by careful weighing⁴⁷ or by drawing of lots.⁴⁸ Special status was expressed by privileges at sacrifice.⁴⁹ The Spartan kings presided, sat down first, began the eating and received a double portion,⁵⁰ from which, as a mark of favour, they rewarded others such as the bringers of news of victories.⁵¹ Victors in games could be distinguished by portions of sacrificial victims: on Cos, winners in the boys' games were so rewarded, while the men got weapons.⁵² The ultimate mark of honour in the realm of sacrifice was, of course, the making of offerings after his death to a man of the city, or elsewhere, as a hero; city-founders were regularly honoured in this way.

Greeks used sacrificial practice to distinguish between themselves and foreign nations: one can consider this from the point of view of their treatment of foreigners at sacrifice, and of their descriptions of non-Greek sacrifices. At many sacrifices, especially the great Panhellenic ones, strangers were welcome. However, in some cases, *xenoi* in general might be excluded from a rite or shrine,⁵³ or specific races, as the Dorians were from the Athenian Acropolis⁵⁴ or Thebans from the oracle of Oropus.⁵⁵ In other places, the *xenoi* would have to give the priest more portions of the beast they sacrificed than would locals.⁵⁶ Alternatively, *xenoi* would have to ask locals to make a preliminary sacrifice for them.⁵⁷ On the other hand, any strangers who

happened to be present at the time of the Laconian Hyacinthia were invited,⁵⁸ and Xenophon was similarly liberal at his shrine of Athena founded after he survived the Anabasis.⁵⁹ In Crete, two tables were set up especially for *xenoi*.⁶⁰

In describing Persian sacrifice, Herodotus seems to concentrate specifically on those aspects which differentiated it from the Greek. They had no altar, fire, libation, flute-music, garlands or sprinkled meal; the sacrificer crowned his head-dress, usually with myrtle, took the animal to a holy place and called on the god. Prayers for king and country only were allowed.

When he has cut up the animal into its parts and cooked it, he makes a little heap of the softest green-stuff he can find, preferably clover, and lays all the meat upon it. This done, a Magus standing by utters an incantation over it in a form of words which is said to recount the Birth of the Gods: they are not permitted to make sacrifice without a Magus. Then after a short interval the worshipper removes the flesh and does what he pleases with it.⁶¹

In addition to the differences noted by Herodotus, the Persian approaches his sacrifice with his hat on; there is no division of parts between himself and the god, and the priest gets nothing for his pains; the animal is merely boiled, not roasted and boiled; the incantation appears always to be the same and is not directed to the particular purpose of the sacrifice; none of the meat is consumed in the sanctuary, and the often elaborate Greek rules about the consumption are missing; there is no requirement to use a sanctuary at all.

The Scythians similarly did not use statues, altars or temples, except of Ares.⁶² Their method of sacrifice was always the same: the victim's front feet were tied together, and the sacrificer pulled on the rope from behind to throw the animal down, before calling on the appropriate god. He put a noose round its neck, with a short stick under the cord which he twisted until the creature was choked. There was no fire, no offering of first-fruits, no libation. The animal was skinned and boiled in an ingenious manner using its stomach and bones, and then the sacrificer made a first-fruits offering of flesh and entrails, which he threw on the ground in front of him. Horses were the commonest victims. The differences are clear: the violence done by the sacrificer standing behind not in front contrasts with the Greek concern to elicit the nod of acquiescence, and flinging the meat onto the ground contrasts with its solemn burning on the Greek altar. The cooking is very different and the giving of first-fruits comes at the end of the rite not the beginning; the usual Greek separation of meat and entrails is not observed.

This differentiation through sacrificial practice could also have a moral and not just an ethnographical or sociological significance. Vegetarianism, as practised by many Pythagoreans and Orphics,⁶³ attracted jaundiced looks, because the major state festivals were not merely celebrations of the gods but expressions of the ideology of the community: to refuse to eat the sacrificial meat meant rejecting not just carnivorous ways but the whole politico-religious structure of authority in the city.⁶⁴ Greek polytheism was tolerant of new gods and of secret (and not always entirely restrained) cultic practice, such as the worship of Adonis, but when these impinged, as was almost inevitable given the closeness of religion and politics, on the authority of the *polis*, then tolerance could wear thin.

In literature too, the moral status of a character is not infrequently examined through his or her relationship to sacrificial practice. Philoctetes in Sophocles's play is marooned on Lemnos as the Greeks make their way to Troy not simply because they could not bear the stench of his wound, but also because his ill-omened cries made sacrifice impossible;⁶⁵ his isolation from the human world is marked in part by the way in which he eats the animals which he catches without sacrificing them. Part of the negative characterization of Clytaemnestra in the *Oresteia* is the way in which her murder of her husband is described in terms of the perversion of sacrificial ritual.⁶⁶ A more dramatic instance is found in the *Odyssey*, where the wretched companions of Odysseus are starving in the midst of the sleek herds of the Cattle of the Sun.⁶⁷

They drove off at once the best of the sun-god's cattle.... The men surrounded them and began their prayers to the gods, and because they had no barley-meal in the ship, they plucked instead the fresh tender leaves of a tall oak. Prayer over, they slaughtered and flayed the cows, cut out the thigh-bones and covered them with a double fold of fat, then laid the raw meat above. They had no wine to make a libation over the burning sacrifice, but instead poured water as they set to roasting the inward parts. When the thigh-bones were quite consumed and the entrails tasted, they sliced and spitted the rest.... Then the gods began to show signs and wonders to my crew. The beasts' hides began to move: the flesh on the spits, raw or roasted, began to bellow, and there was a noise like the noise of cattle.

They tried their best to follow the pattern of sacrifice, but their attempt was doomed.⁶⁸ The Greeks normally sacrificed domestic⁶⁹ not hunted animals,⁷⁰ so these cattle which were neither wild nor domesticated and which they 'surround' in a kind of hunt are inappropriate. In place of the barley-grains, symbols, along with wine, of the civilized life of cultivation lived by mankind, they substitute leaves of the oak, a tree that symbolized the savage existence of early man. Confusion is introduced into the sacrifice and the animals respond in kind: the hides move though the beasts are dead, and the distinction between raw and cooked is effaced as both types of flesh give out sound. Before long, the sailors were at the bottom of the sea.

Unusual types of sacrifice did not, however, always point to barbarity or moral turpitude: at specific times of the year variations on the normal practice were played for a number of different reasons. The end, or some other significant time, of the year would be marked by rites which expressed symbolically the dissolution of normal social and religious life: normality was then ritually recreated at the start of the new year. Greek cities do not have a New Year Festival such as is found in Babylon, but there are examples of festivals which function in essentially the same way.

For instance, in Athens, a sequence of festivals expressed dissolution in Skirophorion, the last month of the year.⁷¹ A myth told of the quarrel between Athena and Poseidon, who shared the Erechtheum on the Acropolis. At the Skira, under a sunshade, the priestess of Athena Polias and the priest of Poseidon left their temple for that of Demeter and Persephone near Eleusis: the gods symbolically abandon the city. The citizen women gathered in the Thesmophorion in Piraeus, so that family life was disrupted. Two days later at the Dipolieia, the Kerykes, a priestly

clan associated with Eleusis, 'occupied' the Acropolis and performed the Bouphonia sacrifice to Zeus:⁷² oxen circled the altar on which cakes were placed and the first to eat a cake was slain with an axe by a man who then fled.⁷³ The others shared the guilt by eating the ox in the Prytaneion. A trial was held at which the blame was passed from person to person, until it fell on the axe and flaying-knife, which were flung into the sea. The hide was then stuffed and harnessed to a plough. The sacrifice to Zeus on Athena's Acropolis in her absence, the presence of 'Eleusinians' and the anomalous Bouphonia rite all mark this as an abnormal period. A month later was the Kronia, when the masters and slaves ate together to represent the age of Kronos before Zeus imposed order.⁷⁴ The great new-year festival was the Panathenaia. A procession began at the Sacred Gate in the Ceramicus and mounted to the Acropolis via the Agora, reversing the direction of the Skira procession and representing the return of the gods to the city. There was a ship-cart,⁷⁵ with the robe to be presented to Athena on its mast. Representatives of all ages and classes took part, including metics and slaves. One hundred cows are sacrificed and shared by all, as the restoration of normal life is marked by the return of normal sacrificial practice; Athena and Poseidon are again together in the Erechtheum, the opposition between them no more than another sign of the dissolution at the year's end.

There was an unusual rite on Mt Kithairon, which marked in a comparable way the quarrel and reconciliation between Hera and Zeus. An oak tree was selected, by placing pieces of boiled flesh in the oak-grove and seeing to which tree a crow that seized a piece of meat flew, and fourteen wooden statues (*daidala*) were made of it; one was decked out as a bride and drawn to the top of the mountain in a wagon. On the top of the mountain, an altar was constructed of wood 'as if they were constructing an edifice of stone [the usual material for an altar]' and brushwood was piled on top. A cow and a bull were sacrificed, and then, filled with wine and incense, were burned along with the *daidala*. A myth told how Zeus tricked Hera into reconciliation, by announcing he intended to remarry and dressing a wooden statue as his bride; Hera destroyed this and, amused by the trick, forgave Zeus.⁷⁶ Again, a period of stress and dissolution is marked by strange ritual activity.

'Unusual' sacrifice was also employed in a number of different contexts, to which I now turn. One of the most famous unusual sacrificial acts was the tearing apart (*sparagmos*) and eating raw (*omophagia*) of the victim associated with Dionysiac cult. Mythology provides many examples, like Pentheus in Euripides's *Bacchae*, but our evidence about Dionysiac worship does not suggest that there were actual instances of eating raw flesh in the manner of the myths.⁷⁷ Though private cults of Dionysus may have been more orgiastic (in the modern sense), the state cults of Athens are remarkable for their orderliness and dignity: there were obscene songs at the Lenaia, a wine-drinking competition at the Anthesteria, and a phallic procession at the Rural Dionysia, but these are pale reflections of the role of sex and alcohol in the myths. There were of course no orgies at the Great Dionysia. Sacrifices to Dionysus appear to have taken the normal form at these and other festivals: even at that of Dionysus Anthroporrhaites on Tenedos, the new-born calf dressed in buskins was sacrificed in the standard manner.⁷⁸ The wildness of the myths is a good example of how mythology explores life through extreme examples.

The nature of the divinity in whose honour the sacrifice was made was sometimes

graphically expressed by the distinctive nature of the rite. For instance, Artemis has the characteristics of the Mistress of the Animals familiar from Near-Eastern cult.⁷⁹ At Patrae, she was worshipped in dramatic fashion as Laphria, possibly 'The Destroyer', in a rite which brings out strongly the violent nature of the hunting goddess who 'delights in the bow and killing beasts in the mountains',⁸⁰ while at the same time the presence of the young animals reminds one that she is their protector and mistress.

Round the altar in a circle they set up green logs of wood, each of them sixteen ells long, and inside this fence they pile the driest wood on the altar. When the time of the festival is at hand they construct a smooth ascent to the altar by heaping earth on the altar steps. The festival opens with a most gorgeous procession in honour of Artemis, the rear being brought up by the virgin priestess riding on a car drawn by deer.... The people bring the edible kinds of birds and victims of every sort, and throw them alive on the altar; also wild boars, deer and roe; others bring the cubs of wolves and bears, others the fullgrown beasts. They also lay on the altar the fruit of cultivated trees. Next they set fire to the wood. I have seen a bear and other beasts struggling to get out at the first burst of the flames, some of them actually escaping by sheer strength. But the people who threw them in drag them back again to the burning pile.⁸¹

The special nature of some sacrifices was marked by the nature of the offerings. The usual liquid offered to the gods was wine mixed with water: sacrifices or parts of sacrifices involving neat wine, or other liquids such as honey, milk, water or oil, were often unusual, for instance in not involving the shedding of blood, or connected in some way with the uncanny or the marginal.⁸² Sacrifices without wine were known as *νηφάλια*, 'sober' sacrifices,⁸³ and it was believed that the earliest men, living in better times, had not sacrificed animals but offered these other substances, along with fruits, perfumes and unguents: such offerings were known as *ἁγνὰ θύματα* ('holy sacrifices').⁸⁴ In Demeter's sanctuary at Phigaleia, there was one altar on which they did not offer blood-sacrifice, but set out the produce of cultivated trees, wine, honey and untreated wool, and then poured oil over it.⁸⁵ Sometimes these substances appeared in different ways in connection with blood-sacrifice. For instance, a sacrifice may be *νηφάλιος μέχρι σπλάγχων* ('sober until the tasting of the *splanchna*').⁸⁶ The context of such offerings is often death.⁸⁷ For instance, at the yearly sacrifice to those who lost their lives at Plataia against the Persians, a black bull was sacrificed, though on a pile of wood rather than a normal altar; at the same time, oil, unguent, milk and wine were offered, and the chief magistrate, who was forbidden at other times to handle iron or wear anything but white clothes, was dressed in purple, carried a sword and washed and anointed the grave-stele.⁸⁸ A special occasion called for a special sacrifice. Sometimes, bloodless offerings mark a marginal period in a rite and the restoration of blood-sacrifice the return of normality. For example, each year on Samos on her birthday, the statue of Hera was secretly taken by her priestess and hidden on the shore amongst withies, where it was rediscovered and offered cakes. It was then purified and returned to its temple, where blood-sacrifices were made.⁸⁹ This rite was connected with her marriage to Zeus, with whom she slept before the nuptials, which justified a similar practice among the Samians.⁹⁰

Finally, the question of human sacrifice in ancient Greece is a vexed one.⁹¹ The Greeks liked to distinguish between themselves and the barbarians by their own avoidance of human sacrifice, but there are various persistent suggestions, especially in myth, that the Greeks used it themselves.⁹² On the other hand, most scholars would now accept that, if there were exceptional instances of it, perhaps at times of severe national crisis, it did not exist anywhere in Greece as a regular cult practice. A number of rituals are said to have been substituted for actual human sacrifice, such as the Arkteia at Brauron, where young girls were dedicated to the service of Artemis for a certain period in atonement for the death of a bear sacred to the goddess, who had initially demanded young girls as restitution.⁹³ In a similar way, at Halai Araphenides blood was drawn from the neck of a man to recompense Artemis Tauropolos for Orestes' escape from being sacrificed to her.⁹⁴ However, as Henrichs argues,⁹⁵ it is dangerous to see human and animal sacrifice as two separate steps on the road from inhumanity to humanity: they can exist side by side, as at Carthage. The various scapegoat rituals are sometimes invoked as actual human sacrifices or as reflections of them. They involved taking variously ill-favoured people and expelling them from the city in different ways. They look as though they might hide actual slaughter, but in fact care seems to have been taken to avoid it.⁹⁶ when the criminal was flung from the cliffs of Leukas, he was provided with wings and birds to help his flight and a boat to pick him up and take him away.⁹⁷ There is an apparently historical example of human sacrifice, in the story of how a *mantis* persuaded Themistokles to sacrifice Persian captives to Dionysus Omestes, when their arrival coincided with the sacrificial fire blazing up and a sneeze.⁹⁸ However, the historicity of this is made highly questionable by the fact that Omestes is not found as an epithet of Dionysus in Attica.⁹⁹

If, as we have seen, sacrifices served to mark boundaries, they were also used to cross them. Thus we find offerings made at the major points of transition in human life. There are rites for births, such as the Athenian Amphidromia where the father ran round the hearth of the house with his new child and made a celebratory meal.¹⁰⁰ At the Apatouria, when young men officially became members of their phratries, they dedicated their hair to mark the leaving of adolescence; their fathers made a sacrifice called the *meion*.¹⁰¹ Marriage was regularly sealed in the same way:¹⁰² when sacrifice was made to Hera Gamelios ('of marriage'), the gall was not offered, so that bitterness might be absent from married life.¹⁰³ Burials involved a variety of rituals whose excesses had from time to time to be curbed.¹⁰⁴ There might be a *prothuma* ('pre-sacrifice') before interment, and an offering after the house was purified from the pollution of death.¹⁰⁵ Sacrifice took place at the freeing of a slave.¹⁰⁶ Initiation into mystery cults was another rite of passage, since the initiate was moved from his old, unsatisfactory status to a new life. At the Eleusinian Mysteries, the Initiates would bathe in the sea with a piglet which was then sacrificed,¹⁰⁷ and there were other communal offerings. In the Mysteries at Andania, a number of different beasts for sacrifice were prescribed.¹⁰⁸

Sacrifice was offered before embarking on various exploits, such as a journey by ship¹⁰⁹ or athletics-races.¹¹⁰ The *sphagia* before battles have also been interpreted as liminal sacrifices: they 'signalled a "liminal period" in which men at the threshold of hand-to-hand combat sought unusual ritual remedies in an effort to cope with

extraordinary psychological strain, and with the threat to their lives'.¹¹¹ The elements of the sacrifice are unusual: the offering is not made to any god, except sometimes Artemis Agrotera;¹¹² a *mantis* rather than a *biereus* presides; the meat is not divided and consumed but the blood plays a more important role; and the rite is carried out in no man's land, not at a shrine. The Spartans performed elaborate sacrificial procedures before starting on a campaign: sacrifice was made in Sparta, and if it was propitious, another was made at the borders, and if this also was propitious, they set out; the fire from this sacrifice went before them and was never extinguished, and all kinds of sacrificial animal followed them.¹¹³

Sacrifice was also used for moving from pollution to purification.¹¹⁴ A pig would be slain above the polluted person, so that the blood flowed over his head and hands.¹¹⁵ Before meetings of the Athenian Assembly, the Peristiarkhoi killed a pig and carried it round the area where the assembly sat to create a purified area,¹¹⁶ and at Mantinea the whole land was purified in a similar manner. The *pharmakos* rites performed a similar function on behalf of the city. The Macedonian army marched between the parts of a dog cut in two.¹¹⁷ Gyrene provides an unusual example of purification, in which the valuing of the victim before sacrifice is transferred to the polluted man: anyone subject to the penalty for sacrilege or similar, the *dekate*, had to purify himself with blood and cleanse the shrine. He then put himself up for sale in the agora, to determine his maximum value. After this, he made a *prothusis*, followed by the *dekate* itself, which was presumably bought with the money he had made, and which he took away 'into a pure place'.¹¹⁸ The same inscription gives regulations for dealing with suppliants who came for purification. The meaning is unfortunately somewhat obscure, but it seems that in cases where the suppliant and the one he had wronged could not be brought together, one made two *kolossoi*, wooden or earthen statues of a man and a woman, and 'received' (ὑποδεξάμενον) them and 'gave them a portion of everything', and, having done 'the customary things', took them and the portions into wild woodland and left them there.¹¹⁹ Hospitality, presumably involving as usual sacrificial meats, heals the rift. In Gyrene too, one could take preventive action, and defend oneself against plagues by sacrifice of a ruddy-coloured goat before the city gates.¹²⁰

This chapter has been mainly concerned with public sacrifices and their role in Greek culture. I close with some more general remarks on the modalities of sacrificial practice. Individuals could sacrifice for a variety of reasons, such as to make a request of the divinity, to fulfil a vow, to purify him or herself from the pollutions attaching to everyday life, or to swear an oath, often by holding parts of the sacrificial animal.¹²¹ The actual sacrifice would usually be carried out by a *biereus*, who might have the help, especially from the fifth century onwards, of the *mageiros*, whose roles have been studied by Berthiaume. In the absence of the *biereus*, one could make one's own sacrifice:¹²² on Chios there was a shrine where it was sufficient to call out three times for the officiant before doing so.¹²³ The priest would get part of the sacrifice, often laid down by a law, and, again depending on the local regulations, the sacrificer might consume the meat on the spot or take part of it home.

The choice of victim was sometimes left to the sacrificer, sometimes laid down by law. In general, one cannot say that particular deities always received particular types of victim. It is sometimes stated that female deities required female victims, but

this is not so.¹²⁴ There are, however, some tendencies to be discerned.¹²⁵ Bloodless and cereal sacrifices were rarely offered to Athena,¹²⁶ but 'it is rare and exceptional to find [Artemis] related by way of sacrifice, legend or cult-name with the animals of the higher agricultural community...in certain localities the calf and the sheep were tabooed in her ritual'.¹²⁷ Pregnant animals were demanded by certain deities, usually those involved with fertility, such as Earth, Demeter¹²⁸ and Hera Anthie. Animals that were not regularly sacrificed might be to particular divinities: the dog is unusually sacrificed to Hecate,¹²⁹ and at Platanistai two groups of Spartan youths fought a ritual battle on an island reached by two bridges, having sacrificed a puppy to Enyalios the night before, 'judging that the most valiant of domestic animals must be acceptable to the most valiant of the gods'.¹³⁰ The dog is often associated with boundaries,¹³¹ and the initiatory nature of this rite is obvious. Not infrequently, particular beasts were specifically forbidden: on Thasos, Apollo and the Nymphs did not want pigs or (a very rare interdiction) sheep.¹³² Unlike the Romans, the Greeks were not insistent that if a mistake was made everything had to be redone from the start, but there are regulations covering such mistakes as offering the wrong animal: one might have to sacrifice a particular animal as a penalty,¹³³ or to 'redo the sacrifice', as in the case of taking wine into the *dromos* at Delphi, where a wineless offering had to be made.¹³⁴ Music too could be forbidden, as on Thasos again, or on Paros (whence Thasos took some of its cults), where no garlands or music could be used in the rites of the Kharites.¹³⁵ Sometimes what happened to the animal would be determined by some mythical tale, as in the case of the pigs sacrificed unusually to Zeus on Crete, which were killed but not eaten because a sow had nourished the god as a child.¹³⁶

Some sanctuaries were open all the time for offerings, others opened only on a particular day, as prescribed in sacred calendars: daily service was a late introduction, in imitation of and competition with oriental cults.¹³⁷ Other timings were also prescribed: a five-yearly sacrifice might be made to Zeus where a thunderbolt struck,¹³⁸ or to him for rain as Hyetios 'when necessary'.¹³⁹

Not infrequently, a sacrifice might be secret:¹⁴⁰ 'the Delphians believe that the remains of Dionysus lie in their oracular shrine; and the *Hosioi* ("Holy Ones") make a secret (*aporrheton*) sacrifice in the temple of Apollo when the Thyiades awake Liknites'.¹⁴¹ This was especially true of mystery cults, and rites involving groups where others were excluded, such as those of the Thesmophoria conducted by the women alone.

The inscriptions also give us information on various other practical matters. The presence of animals, let alone the act of slaughtering them, inevitably led to the production of not a little dung; this, with all the ash from the burning of parts of the animals, would have made for considerable mess and was potentially defiling. A number of inscriptions prescribe removal of dung from the sacred space.¹⁴² Similarly, the washing of parts of the victim had sometimes to take place outside the sanctuary,¹⁴³ but then there could be laws forbidding the polluting of neighbouring rivers, springs or streams by washing or tanning.¹⁴⁴ One shrine even had a sacrifice to get rid of the equally inevitable flies.¹⁴⁵ There were regulations to protect sanctuaries from fire,¹⁴⁶ and for purification if a corpse or bones found their way into the shrine.¹⁴⁷ Sanctuaries contained many vessels and other objects which people found it useful to borrow, so that this too had to be regulated.¹⁴⁸

The financing of sanctuaries took many forms. Cults were set up and provided with money by individuals and the state. As a large number of inscriptions show, priesthoods were often sold, the purchaser being given rights to parts of the animal and other privileges; in one case, the privileges depend on the amount paid.¹⁴⁹ Shrines could also be leased out,¹⁵⁰ or their land let for pasturage.¹⁵¹ Indeed, parts of the animal, especially the skin, would regularly go to the shrine or the priest, and those parts laid out for the gods on the *trapeza*, the table for offerings, were in fact taken by priest or shrine to be consumed or sold.¹⁵² much of the meat sold in the agora probably came from emoluments of priests.¹⁵³ Money might be collected in the form of a tax paid by each sacrificer: on Thasos, the tax was an obol or more, and when one thousand had been collected an offering was deposited in the shrine.¹⁵⁴ Perhaps in order to maintain cults important to the city, obligation to make sacrifice was imposed on a number of groups who made their living in state matters. Thus, on Cos in the first century, farmers of taxes on a wide range of goods, such as bread, smoked fish, etc., and on *betairai*, and the oar-planers all had to provide offerings.¹⁵⁵ Doctors in Athens sacrificed twice a year to Asclepius and Hygieia on behalf of their patients and themselves, and sacrifice was obligatory before and after cures at centres of Asclepius worship.¹⁵⁶ A tax might be levied on pay of soldiers, as for the cult, appropriately enough, of Enyalios on Lindos, where the tax of one-sixtieth paid for the sacrifice of a boar, dog and kid and a *pompe* with hoplites.¹⁵⁷ Around 400 BC in Athens, there were taxes paid to the cult on the use of water from the Halykos spring in the sanctuary of the Nymphs,¹⁵⁸ and on wood and *katharmata* ('purifications').¹⁵⁹ Other ways of increasing a cult's importance might be to ensure that as much meat as possible was provided for the people.¹⁶⁰ Skins could be sold to raise money for the cult, sometimes according to regulations.¹⁶¹ On the other hand, taxes could also be remitted in order to tempt more people to make their offerings: in fifth-century Thasos, the shrine of Herakles remitted three taxes, the portions given to the administration of the shrine, to the priest and as prizes in the games.¹⁶² Income from hotels built for worshippers no doubt also helped.¹⁶³

All meat does appear to have been ritually killed, if not on an altar then by the *mageiroi* in a butcher's shop.¹⁶⁴ The question of the disposal of animals that were, for whatever reason, not fitting for sacrifice is not an easy one, given the paucity and fragmentary nature of the material. On Cos, animals that were supposed to be pregnant but were found not to be were dealt with in two ways. If they were *apophora*, that is, could be taken from the sanctuary after sacrifice, they were given back to the man who sold them; if not, it appears they were possibly burnt as a holocaust and the price paid to Demeter, though there is a lacuna at this point.¹⁶⁵ More problematic is the case of meats called *athuta* ('not sacrificeable' or 'not sacrificed')¹⁶⁶ because they were from animals that were not felt appropriate for sacrifice in a particular area,¹⁶⁷ or from animals that were sick¹⁶⁸ or physically deformed.¹⁶⁹ Such meat could, however, be sold and eaten: a Delphic inscription of 480–470 forbids the sale of them in the sanctuary;¹⁷⁰ Erotian mentions a market where they were sold,¹⁷¹ and Pollux says donkey-meat was sold separately from other meats in a different part of the market, the *memnoneia*.¹⁷² No doubt the dog- and ass-meat sold by the Sausage-Seller in Aristophanes' *Knights* came under the same category.¹⁷³ However, it is not unlikely that the majority of Greeks would rather have forgone meat completely than eat meat of this kind.¹⁷⁴

As Christianity increased its influence, blood-sacrifice was gradually superseded because Christ's sacrifice rendered it unnecessary. Christ 'had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever',¹⁷⁵ and when St Thomas Aquinas described the mass as an *immolatio*, he meant that it was an *imago repraesentativa passionis Christi*.¹⁷⁶ Yet blood sacrifice went on, not just in non-Christian countries. Burkert describes a Cappadocian rite that continued into this century: opposite the chapel altar incense was burned on a sacrificial altar, round which a sheep or goat was led three times as children threw flowers and grass on it. The priest stood by the altar, as the owner of the animal made the sign of the cross three times and slaughtered the animal with a prayer; the blood spattered the altar. The feast was prepared and the priest received skin, thigh, head and feet.¹⁷⁷ The continuities are obvious.

NOTES

- 1 I am grateful to Professor E.P.Sanders (whose *Judaism* (London and Philadelphia, 1992), 103–18 gives a succinct critical account of Jewish sacrifice), for the initial impetus to write this piece, which was delivered at the Oxford New and Old Testament Seminars, whose members I thank for their comments.
- 2 Stengel, OG 187–90; *LSA* 17; Plut. *Mor.* 728C–30F.
- 3 E.g. Paus. 2.11.7; G.Wolff, *Philologus* 28 (1869), 188–91.
- 4 J.Gould, 'On making sense of Greek religion', in Easterling and Muir 1–33.
- 5 M.Beard, *PCPS* 33 (1987), 1–15.
- 6 For methodological pitfalls in the study of Greek sacrifice, cf. Kirk, *EH* 41–90.
- 7 Deuteronomy 12.8.
- 8 The range of sources for Greek sacrifice is also much broader than for Jewish: literary texts, anthropological sections of historians like Herodotus or compendious writers like Plutarch, periegetic writers like Pausanias, inscriptions on stones and descriptions by often highly unsympathetic Christian writers all contribute. There is no complete collection, but see e.g. *LS*, *LSS*, *LSA* (the main primary sources for this chapter), *SIG* nos. 977–1181; Farnell; Prott and Ziehen.
- 9 M.H.Hansen, *Apagoge, Endeixis and Ephegesis* (Leiden, 1976), 54–98 (62 n.9 for the exclusion, e.g. *IG* 1³.5 A.32).
- 10 Xen. *Anab.* 7.8.3–6; Possis *FGH* 480 F 1; Call. fr. 178. 1–5.
- 11 Hdt. 8.144.2; Ar. *Lys.* 1129–34.
- 12 *LS* 71.7–12 (Boiotian Federation).
- 13 S Ar. *Clouds* 386; *IG* 1³.71.58; *SIG* 67.13, 1051.1.
- 14 *LS* 92.26–8.
- 15 Thuc. 1.25.4; cf. I.Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece* (Leiden, 1987), 114–34.
- 16 *LSS* 19.20–7.
- 17 *LSS* 42.
- 18 Burkert, *GR* 56f. gives an especially graphic one.
- 19 *LS* 151 A.22ff. (mid-fourth century); there are some uncertainties of interpretation.
- 20 The meaning of the verb is uncertain: cf. *LS* p. 256, *LSA* p. 49f. for the sense 'burn completely'. Since the *splankhna* were usually eaten, this might not be the meaning here.

- 21 The elaborate arrangements are given in *LS* 151 A.8ff.; cf. 65.70f.; *LSS* 83.15–19; M.Segre, *Il Mondo Classico* (1933), 136–40. A curse might be used to protect the chosen beast (*LS* 145).
- 22 Eur. *HF* 926ff.; Ar. *Peace* 956ff., *Lys.* 1129f.
- 23 Plut. *Mor.* 729F; Ar. *Peace* 960; Porph. *de abst.* 2.9; *LS* 151 A. 19. *LS* 154 B.III.45f. seems to concern animals that do not wish to follow the procession.
- 24 *LS* 163.8.
- 25 For different kinds of payment to priests etc., cf. *LS* 60.7–17: ‘the god shall have one leg of the first ox, the *Hiaromnamones* the other; a leg of the second ox goes to the singers, the other to the guardians, with the entrails’; 11 B; 19.
- 26 For the techniques of the butchery, cf. Berthiaume 44–61; J.Durand, *CS* 87–118 (with illustrations).
- 27 Cf. *LSA* 50.35 ὀπτησις σπλάγχων, κρεῶν ἔψησις (‘roasting of the *splankhna*, boiling of the flesh’).
- 28 *Theog.* 535–57.
- 29 *CS* 21–86.
- 30 The *theoxenia* (‘entertainment of the gods’) preserved a vestige of the old ways: a table and couch were prepared for the divinities, who were presumed to be present and are so shown in representations: F.Deneken, ‘De theoxeniis’ (Diss. Berlin, 1881); Pi. *Ol.* 3.
- 31 [Aesch.] *PV* 493ff.
- 32 For other mythical origins of sacrifice, cf. W.Burkert, *StudStor* 25 (1984), 835–45 on *H.Herm.*; Asclepiades of Cyprus, *FGH* 752 F 1.
- 33 *Od.* 10.517–37; 11.23–50.
- 34 On all these words and their cognates, see Casabona 69–297; for other terms, Svenbro, *CS* 207f.
- 35 Diod. Sic. 5.4.2.
- 36 Σ Lucian, *Dial. Mer.* 2.1 (p. 275 Rabe).
- 37 Plut. *Mor.* 364F; the Rhodians used a water-organ (Farnell 5.305⁸⁹); cf. Paus. 8.7.2 (horses bridled and bitted for Poseidon in Argolid). Sacrifices to rivers might involve some victims being thrown into them and others sacrificed (*LS* 96.34–7 Achelous). It was sometimes expressly forbidden to throw offerings into springs (*LS* 152, Nymphs).
- 38 In general, Hdt. 2.43.4ff.
- 39 Paus. 2.10.1 (tr. Frazer); cf. 8.34.3 (Orestes at shrine of Maniai, Megalopolis) and Xenophanes’ reply to the Eleans (21 A 13 DK).
- 40 Paus. 3.19.3.
- 41 Paus. 2.35.5ff.: it takes place ‘every year in the summer-time’.
- 42 Also used in normal sacrifice: *LS* 151 A.31 (above).
- 43 *LSA* 61.8f. (ὁ δημόσιος; Mylasa); P.Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Delos* (Paris, Hdt. 1.216.4. But see now R.G.Osborne, ‘Women and sacrifice in ancient Greece’, *CQ* 1970), 272f.; cf. perh. *LSS* 10 A. 28.25–7 (Athens; 403–399 BC). Even where an inscription says that the priestess performs the sacrifice (e.g. *LSS* 92, 96.5), a male *mageiros* most likely did the actual slaying and butchering; cf. Berthiaume 29–31 and *passim*.
- 44 Hdt. 1.216.4. But see now R.G.Osborne, ‘Women and sacrifice in ancient Greece’, *CQ* 43 (1993), 392–405.
- 45 Cf. n. 36. For ancient sources, Farnell 3.75–112; K.Dahl, *Thesmophoria* (Copenhagen, 1976), 104–48; cf. M.Detienne, *CS* 129–47.
- 46 *Il.* 1.468 (δαιτός ἔϊσις); Plut. *Mor.* 644B; *LS* 33 B.24–7; *LSA* 39.22–5.

- 47 *LS* 98.12–16; *LSA* 54.3.
- 48 *LSA* 50.36f.; Plut. *Mor.* 642F.
- 49 Conversely, people honoured in cities or given magistracies would often make an ex-voto offering to a god to mark the fact (W.H.D.Rouse, *Greek Votive Offerings* (Cambridge, 1902), 257ff.).
- 50 Hdt. 6.56 (in war they decided how many animals were sacrificed and received skins and chins as special privileges).
- 51 Plut. *Ages.* 33.8; P.Cartledge, *Agesilaos* (London, 1987), 154.
- 52 *LS* 98.32f.; *LSS* 61.80.
- 53 *LS* 96.24–6 (a sacrifice to Chthonian Zeus and Ge).
- 54 Hdt. 5.72.3f.
- 55 Hdt. 8.134; cf. 6.38; Plut. *Mor.* 267D, 400E.
- 56 *LSA* 59.5.
- 57 *LSA* 46.6.
- 58 Polemo *ap.* Ath. 138F.
- 59 Xen. *Anab.* 5.3.9.
- 60 Dosiadas and Pyrgion *ap.* Ath. 143B–E; *CIG* 2554.60ff.; Eustath. *in Od.* 19.172 (p. 196.43–5 Stallbaum).
- 61 1.131 (tr. de Sélincourt); cf. J.-P.Vernant, in M.Detienne and J.-P.Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society* (tr. J.Lloyd, Hassocks and New Jersey, 1978), 253f.
- 62 4.59.2–61; cf. F.Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus* (Berkeley, 1988).
- 63 Acousmatic Pythagoreans would eat sacrificial meat (Plut. *Mor.* 729C).
- 64 M.Detienne, *Dionysos Slain* (Baltimore and London, 1977), 68–94. In general, C.Sourvinou-Inwood, 'What is *polis* religion?', in O.Murray and S.Price, *The Greek City* (Oxford, 1990), 295–322.
- 65 Soph. *Phil.* 8–11.
- 66 F.I.Zeitlin, *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 149–84.
- 67 12.353–65, 394–6 (tr. Shewring).
- 68 For the analysis, cf. Vernant, *op. cit.* (n. 61), 239–49.
- 69 But see Paus. 9.12.1.
- 70 Stengel, *OG* 197–202.
- 71 For this analysis and bibliography, see Burkert, *HN* 135–61.
- 72 Deubner 158–74; Parke 162–7. Compare the rite on Tenedos for Dionysus Anthorporhaistes ('Tearer of Men'), where the participants showered the killer with stones 'to remove the pollution from themselves', and he fled into the sea (Ael. *NA* 12.34).
- 73 A goat was chosen in a similar fashion for Zeus Askraios at Halicarnassus (Apollonius, *Hist. Mir.* 13).
- 74 Philochorus, *FGH* 328 F 97; Accius, fr. 3; Plut. *Comp. Lyc. et Numa* 1.5; cf. other examples in Ant. Carystius *ap.* Athen. 639.
- 75 Compare ship-cart and restoration of normal sacrifice in the returns of Dionysus at Smyrna (Aristeid. *Or.* 17.6, 21.4; Philostr. *VS* 1.25.1; Burkert, *GR* 413 nn. 38f.).
- 76 Paus. 9.3.
- 77 On the *omophagion* from third-century Miletus (*LSA* 48.2f.), cf. A.Henrichs, *ZPE* 4 (1969), 223–41; and Farnell 5.150–9 for the evidence.
- 78 Ael. *NA* 12.34.

- 79 Burkert, *SH* 78–98; *GR* 149–52, 362 n. 48.
- 80 *H.Apbr.* 18.
- 81 Paus. 7.18.11–13. Greeks used holocausts mainly in cults of the dead, but also to Hera and Zeus. See also Paus. 4.31.9; Piccaluga, *EH* 243–87.
- 82 On oil, cf. C.Mayer, *Das Öl im Kultus der Griechen*, (Würzburg, 1917); A.M.Bowie, ‘Oil in ancient Greece and Rome’, in M.Dudley and G.Rowell (eds), *The Oil of Gladness: anointing in the Christian tradition* (London, 1993), 26–34; on milk, honey and neat wine, F.Graf in G.Piccaluga (ed.), *Perennitas (Studi A.Brelich)* (Rome, 1980), 209–21.
- 83 L.Ziehen, **Νηφάλια**, *RE* 16.2481–9; cf. Σ Soph. OC 100.
- 84 Empedokles, 31 F 128 DK; Pl. *Legg.* 782C; Porph. *de abst.* 2.20ff.
- 85 Paus. 8.42.11.
- 86 *LS* 18 A.41f.
- 87 A heroic figure might receive a holocaust that was **νηφάλιος**, e.g. *LS* 18 B.16ff.
- 88 Plut. *Aristeides* 21.
- 89 Athen. 672A–E; cf. Polyæn. *Strat.* 1.23.
- 90 Σ *Il.* 14.296.
- 91 Hughes is the most recent (and sceptical) treatment; cf. also Henrichs, *EH* 195–242.
- 92 Soph. fr. 126; Eur. *IT* 463–6; [Pl.] *Min.* 315CD; Diod. Sic. 13.86.3; Plut. *Mor.* 171B–E.
- 93 H.Lloyd-Jones, *JHS* 103 (1983), 87–103; C.Sourvinou-Inwood, *Studies in Girls’ Transitions* (Athens, 1988).
- 94 Eur. *IT* 1458–61.
- 95 *EH* 204.
- 96 Hipponax fr. 5–10 West; J.Bremmer, *HSCP* 87 (1983), 299–320; Burkert, *GR* 82–4; Hughes 139–65.
- 97 Strabo 452.
- 98 Plut. *Them.* 13.2–3.
- 99 Henrichs, *EH* 221–3.
- 100 Ephippus fr. 3 K–A; S Pl. *Tbt.* 160E; Suda a 1722; Kirk, *EH* 56–61.
- 101 *LS* 19.
- 102 *LS* 163.1; Paus. 2.34.12; 3.13.9.
- 103 Plut. *Mor.* 141EF.
- 104 *LS* 97.
- 105 *LS* 97.12, 15f.
- 106 *LS* 160.4ff.
- 107 Plut. *Phoc.* 28.3; S Aeschin. 3.130; *IG* 1³.84.35f.
- 108 *LS* 65.67ff.; cf. 89.1ff.
- 109 A.R. 1.359ff.
- 110 *LSS* 19.61; Paus. 6.20.8.
- 111 Henrichs, *EH* 216; cf. W.K.Pritchett, *The Greek State at War*, vol. 3: *Religion* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1979), 83–8, and generally 154–229.
- 112 Xen. *HG* 4.2.20; *Rep. Lac.* 13.8; cf. *Anab.* 3.2.12.
- 113 Xen. *Rep. Lac.* 13.2f. For other divinatory aspects of sacrifice, cf. [Aesch.] *PV* 496–9; *IG* 14.617 (**καπναύγης**, ‘smoke-watcher’); Paus. 1.34.5; 2.24.1 (priestess inspired by blood); 4.32.3 (movements of sacrificial bull tied to post interpreted); W.R.Halliday, *Greek Divination* (Oxford, 1928), 184–204; R.C.T.Parker, in A.Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta*, (London, 1989), 152, 155ff.

- 114 In general, cf. R.C.T.Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983).
- 115 Aesch. *Eum.* 282f.; Parker, op. cit., 370–4.
- 116 Ar. *Ach.* 44 and S.
- 117 Livy 40.6; cf. Hdt. 7.39.3; Pl. *Legg.* 753D; Plut. *Mor.* 280C, 290A–D.
- 118 LSS 115A.33ff.
- 119 Ibid., B.29ff.
- 120 Ibid., A. 4–7.
- 121 Hdt. 6.67f.; cf. Paus. 3.20.9; 5.24.9–11; these animals were not eaten. Oaths made before the Andanian Mysteries were performed ‘when the offerings were burning, as they made libations of blood and wine’ (*LS* 65. 1ff.); cf. in general Casabona 211–20.
- 122 *LS* 69.25–9; cf. 102 (legislation against abuses of this provision by women in the absence of the priestess); 119.
- 123 *LSS* 129.7–9.
- 124 E.g. by S *Il.* 2.550; cf. P.Stengel, *NJCl Phil* 133 (1886), 329–31; Farnell 1.413.
- 125 ‘Many of these figures [in a god’s iconographical tradition] represent in turn the favoured sacrificial victims of the god: bulls for Zeus and Poseidon, stags and goats for Artemis and Apollo, rams and he-goats for Hermes, and doves for Aphrodite’ (Burkert, *GR* 65).
- 126 Farnell 1.320; e.g. Pi. *Ol.* 7.48.
- 127 Farnell 2.431; e.g. Cic. *Inv.* 2.95.
- 128 *LS* 20 B.9, 12, 49; cf. Paus. 2.11.4 (Eumenides), 9.25.8. In general, Nilsson 1.151f.
- 129 Not the only unusual offering to her: compare cubic stones (γυλλοί) in sixth-century Miletus (*LSA* 41.2f.).
- 130 Paus. 3.14.9.
- 131 C.Mainoldi, *QUCC* 37 (1981), 7–41.
- 132 *LS* 114A.
- 133 *LSS* 115 A.26–31.
- 134 *LS* 76 and p. 152.
- 135 Call, fr.3 (with S Flor. [p. 13 Pfeiffer]); contrast the songs for the Nymphs of the Milesian *Molpoi* (*LSA* 50.29).
- 136 Athen. 376A.
- 137 *LSS* 25 (Epidaurus, Asclepius; 2nd or 3rd c. AD). Daily sacrifices are found, however, e.g. Paus. 9.40.11f. (Khaironeia, to Agamemnon’s sceptre).
- 138 *LSS* 30.
- 139 *LSS* 103.
- 140 Paus. 2.17.1, 3.20.3, 8.38.7; N.M.H.van den Burg, ‘*Aporrbeta, Dromena Orgia*’ (Diss. Utrecht, 1939).
- 141 Plut. *Mor.* 365A.
- 142 *LS* 3.10f., 9.3f.; cf. *SIG* 986. Ash was forbidden in a shrine of Dionysus and Leto (*LSS* 53.8).
- 143 *LS* 9; contrast 151 A.33f.
- 144 *LSS* 4.4–10; 50.
- 145 Paus. 5.14.1.
- 146 *LS* 3.6; 112.
- 147 *LS* 154 B.III.17ff.; cf. *LSA* 83 and p. 186.
- 148 *LSS* 117; cf. *LS* 177.120–30 for a list of shrine paraphernalia.
- 149 *LSA* 37.
- 150 *LS* 47.

- 151 *LS* 67.
 152 Specifically said in *LSA* 24 A.23.
 153 Berthiaume 69.
 154 *LSS* 72; cf. *Ar. Knights* 300–2 and S; Berthiaume 64–7 on the 10 per cent tax on meat treated by *mageiroi* in Athens.
 155 *LS* 168.
 156 *LS* 40.9–13 and p. 75.
 157 *LSS* 85; cf. *IG* 1³. 135 (bef. 434 BC) for Athens.
 158 *LS* 178.
 159 *LSS* 7.
 160 *LSS* 11.
 161 *LS* 85; *LSS* 23b.4; 61; *LSA* 72.45.
 162 *LSS* 63.4f.
 163 *LSS* pp. 104f.
 164 Cf. Berthiaume 44–61, and esp. 67–9 on the similarities and differences between sacrifice and butchery. Though both involved ritual killing, butchery did not involve tasting of *splankhna* for instance (cf. e.g. *Od.* 14.422–38; Berthiaume 64–7); that there was felt to be a difference between sacrificial and butchered meat is suggested by stories of kites stealing the latter but not the former (*Ael. NA* 2.47; D'A.W.Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (London, 1936), 119–21). One might do one's own butchery at home (*Is.* 8.16), though use of a *mageiros* was more usual (Berthiaume 34).
 165 *LS* 154 B.III.37–44.
 166 Berthiaume 81–93 on the terms **κένεβρειον, θνησείδιον, νεκρομαῖα**
 167 E.g. working oxen in Attica (*Xen. Anab.* 6.4.22, 25; cf. *Ael. VH* 5.14).
 168 S vet. *Ar. Kn.* 376a; Pollux 1.29; Pollux 1.25–34 contains much on sacrificial vocabulary and practice.
 169 *Plut. Mor.* 437AB.
 170 *LSS* 37. The text is fragmentary, but see Berthiaume 88.
 171 *Voc. Hipp. Coll.* 82 s.v. **κένεβρεια**
 172 9.48; cf. S *Ar. Wasps* 194.
 173 411–28, 1235–47, 1399f.
 174 Berthiaume 91.
 175 *Hebr.* 10.12.
 176 *Summa Theol.* 3.83.1.
 177 *HN* 8f.; cf. S.Georgourdi, *CS* 183–203 on the present-day Greek 'Korbánia'.

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EARLY ORPHISM



Robert Parker

‘He had the exhausted but resentful air,’ says the narrator of Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited* about his cousin Jasper, in the throes of Oxford examinations, ‘of one who fears he has failed to do himself full justice on the subject of Pindar’s Orphism.’ The theme is one that might still leave a candidate perplexed;¹ a modern cousin Jasper would, however, have much more to be perplexed about. Orphism, obscurest of subjects, has been in part illuminated by a spectacular series of discoveries over the last thirty years or so;² and some ancient problems have come close to a solution, or have found one. But we must begin at the beginning, and ask what kind of a phenomenon ‘Orphism’ is.

One might be tempted to start by defining it as a religious movement associated, above all, with asceticism and with unusual doctrines about the relation of this life and the next. But even a formula that seems so inoffensively general assumes that there was a thing Orphism and that it was a movement; and doubts on just these scores lead the cautious not to use the word except within inverted commas (which, after that warning, I shall abandon). Instead we must begin, it is nowadays generally agreed, not with Orphism but with something more concrete, Orphic books: that is to say, a number of poems in hexameters that were falsely attributed to the mythical singer Orpheus, and may in fact have presented themselves as being his work.³ Two early texts speak of such Orphic books: in Euripides’ *Hippolytus* Theseus, believing the pious hero to have been shown up in gross hypocrisy, sarcastically urges him to

Just go on posturing, and with your diet of no living thing
make a display with your food, and with Orpheus as master
revel, honouring the smoke of many books.
For you’ve been found out!⁴

and Plato in the *Republic* tells disapprovingly how at the doors of the rich

wandering priests and seers present a hubbub of books of Musaios and Orpheus, offspring of the Moon and the Muses, as they say, by which they conduct sacrifice [bloodless, no doubt], persuading not just individuals but also cities that there are forms of release and purifications from wrongdoing through sacrifices and play, effective both during life and also after death;

these they call initiations—they free us from evil there [in the underworld], but if we do not sacrifice a terrible fate awaits us.⁵

As these texts show, with their talk of a ‘hubbub’ and ‘smoke’ of books, the bookishness of Orphism was itself a part of its offensive unorthodoxy.⁶

The first such poems were perhaps composed in the second half of the sixth century BC. Why were they fathered on Orpheus? As the greatest singer known to myth, and one who had visited the underworld in person,⁷ he was ideally qualified to sing of the fate of the soul. But similar poems were ascribed to other ancient bards such as Musaios and Eumolpos,⁸ and the important question concerns not so much the particular choice of Orpheus as the emergence of this genre of pseudonymous religious poetry. The explanation must lie in the problem of securing authority for religious revelation. Hesiod in the eighth or seventh century had sung of the birth of the gods in his own person, aided by the Muses (that is to say, in a sense, by tradition); by the late sixth century the tradition of poetic theogonies was ruptured, and no living mortal could claim privileged insight into the workings of the divine. Musaios and Orpheus, by contrast, were as Plato says ‘offspring of the Moon and the Muses, as they themselves say’.⁹

We start, therefore, with Orphic books. A second uncontroversial step is to note that such books, in contrast for instance to Hesiod’s *Theogony*, are regularly said to have been used in association with rites: the texts already quoted from Euripides and Plato, for instance, speak of ‘revelling’ (βακχεύειν) and of ‘sacrifices and play’. In an important passage of Herodotus Orphic rites are mentioned again and are identified as being ‘bacchic’, as they continue to be in many later sources.¹⁰ Herodotus has noted that the Egyptians do not wear wool in shrines, or put it in graves. He goes

They agree in this with the rites which are known as Orphic *and Bacchic*, but which in fact are Egyptian and Pythagorean. For no one who participates in these rites is permitted to be buried in woollen garments.

A faint doubt attaches to this evidence, however, as the words italicized above are omitted in one family of Herodotus’ manuscripts, though doubtless merely through a scribal error of a common type.¹¹ Fortunately Euripides’ Theseus too appears to identify Orphic and bacchic rites, when he uses the verb βακχεύειν, ‘engage in bacchic revelry’, of the Orphic rites supposedly celebrated by Hippolytus. (Extreme sceptics have however claimed that the word is metaphorical there and proves nothing.) And Orpheus was already closely associated with the worship of Dionysus, though in a complicated way, in Aeschylus’ lost play *Bassarai*.¹²

Orphic books, Orphic rites: did there also exist Orphic people, persons permanently devoted in some sense to Orphic ideals? Scholars used to picture Orphic communities leading the Orphic life, like the Pythagorean societies that followed the rule of Pythagoras. But here it is the contrast between the two related -isms that is conspicuous: we often hear of Pythagoreans, never clearly (except in the sense of composers of Orphic books) of Orphics. One kind of human certainly associated with Orphism is the Ὀρφεοτελεστής, ‘Orpheus-initiator’, the figure who conducts the kind of Orphic rites that we have just discussed. The word Ὀρφεοτελεστής first appears late in the

fourth century,¹³ but the type was clearly already known to Plato. It has, however, been suggested that, if the list of Orphic personnel begins with the Orpheus-initiator, it also ends there: he was a priest without a congregation, or rather, for each ceremony a new but strictly temporary congregation was recruited.¹⁴ But that formulation goes a little too far. There was a famous association, mentioned for instance by Euripides' Theseus, between Orphism and vegetarianism, and it seems to follow that certain initiates sought to lead 'Orphic lives' (the phrase is Plato's)¹⁵ by abstaining from meat; they 'took Orpheus as their master', therefore, for longer than the duration of the initiation alone.

There are also one or two hints that Orpheus-initiates may sometimes have been linked by ties that extended beyond the moment of initiation. An inscription, in letters of the mid-fifth century BC, found at Cumae in southern Italy was evidently intended for a burial-plot: it declares 'it is not lawful for anyone to be deposited here unless he has been initiated to Bacchos (βεβαχχευμένον).'¹⁶ We saw above that Orphic and bacchic rites were associated, and that Orphic initiates were subject to distinctive burial regulations; we shall see later how popular the Orphic message was in southern Italy; it is an easy guess, therefore, that the bacchic rites of the Cumae inscription were of the Orphic kind. If so, the Orphic initiates of Cumae must have owned or controlled (or have been pretending to do so) a burial-plot.

Tantalizing further evidence was first published in 1978; it takes the form of a group of small inscribed bone plaques, of fifth-century date, found in the so-called sanctuary area of Olbia, a colony of Miletus on the north shore of the Black Sea.¹⁷ 'Peace—war: truth—falsehood: Dio', says one; 'life—death—life: truth: Dio—Orphik[]', says another; 'Dio: [falsehood?]—truth: body (?)—soul' a third. On first publication, the last word of the second text was interpreted as the masculine plural 'Ορφικοί, and it was held that Orphics, as people, were at last attested. But the reading of the last two letters has been disputed: perhaps we have no more than a reference to 'Orphic' something—rites, for instance (Ορφικῶν or Ορφικοί). In either case the discovery is spectacular enough; and in such a context 'Dio' is surely an abbreviation for Dionysus. The plaques must have been used in some way by a group that celebrated Orphic/bacchic rites, in which existence was dramatized in terms of sharp polarities. But how permanent was the group? It is here that the textual problem becomes particularly important. If the celebrants called themselves 'Orphics', they surely had a continuing existence as a society. But if the reference is to no more than Orphic rites, there is strictly no way of refuting the sceptical view that it lasted only for the duration of the rite; that at the end the tokens were swept up and put back into the equipment of an Orpheotelest. The testimony of those who have seen the plaque or good photographs of it weighs slightly in favour of the original reading.¹⁸ Apparently then we have an Orphic cult-group in Olbia, an Orphic burial society in Cumae. But it need not follow that such settled groups existed wherever Orphic initiations were performed, or that there was a fixed Orphic creed.

We turn back from people to books. By the fourth century there were numerous Orphic books in circulation (more were added later); and the crucial question is whether they had enough in common for it to be permissible to speak of Orphic ideas. An authoritative denial has recently been issued: 'as for Orphism, the only definite meaning that can be given to the term is "the fashion for claiming Orpheus

as an authority". The history of Orphism is the history of that fashion.¹⁹ At this point, Orphism has in effect vanished.

The dominant trend in Orphic studies for the last sixty years has been one of scepticism,²⁰ and that is a good thing, in the main: it would be a mistake to rebuild the 'Orphic church'. But one may wonder whether in this case deconstruction has not gone too far. We can readily admit that Orphic literature was diverse; that it was not the product of a formal school with a tradition of teaching; that it may have contained discrepant and even contradictory doctrines. But this diversity existed within a circumscribed area. We can name several Orphic poems that existed in the classical period (largely on the authority of Epigenes, a writer apparently of the fourth century: T 222). These are: *Descent to Hades*, *Theogony*, *Sacred Writing* ('ἱερὸς λόγος'), *Hymns*, *Physics*, *Rape of Kore* (?), *Mixing-Bowl*, *Robe*, *Net*. The last three enigmatic titles need a word of explanation: net and robe were probably images for acts of creation or formation, the net for the knitting of the human body, the robe perhaps for the weaving of the world or heavens; the mixing-bowl may similarly have served for an act of cosmic mixing (or a mixing of constituents of man); or perhaps souls drank from it during incarnation.²¹

The titles reveal, certainly, varied themes; but their variety is not infinite. All are concerned with the nature, origins and ultimate fate of man, or the nature and origins of the gods and the universe. 'Orpheus' was not interested, by contrast, in such central themes of epic verse as the deeds or genealogies of heroes. The mythological persona of Orpheus himself was gradually reshaped, to bring it into accord with the poetry he was credited with, and here too a restriction can be seen: Orpheus came to be seen as a founder of rites, but rites of the kind known by Greeks as τελεταί, roughly 'initiations'.²² Thus at Athens he was associated with the Eleusinian Mysteries, with their eschatological promises, but not with such this-worldly festivals as the Panathenaia. Again, some Orphic poems were said in antiquity to be in fact the work of identifiable individuals (T 222); and the authors named were either Pythagoreans—members, that is, of an ascetic sect with eschatological concerns—or persons from the same southern Italian milieu. Ordinary epic poets are not credited with works under Orpheus' name. The ancients, therefore, seem to have found in Orphic literature a particular stamp.

One obvious reason why Orphic poems might have shared common features is their shared ritual function. To be of use to a working Orpheotelest, busy with initiations and expiations, a text had obviously to be of a particular type. We must, however, at once weaken this powerful argument by two reservations. First, it is not strictly demonstrable that all early Orphic poems were written for ritual use. It is true that this is the context in which they are mentioned in the rare early allusions; and it looks, as we shall see, as if the *Theogony*, perhaps the most important among them, was specifically designed for ritual use. But anyone who maintains that *Net*, say, or *Robe* was a purely speculative composition cannot be proved wrong. Second, even texts that had a ritual function could have been, up to a point, quite diverse. Different recipes for securing the initiate's welfare in the afterlife could have been followed, different eschatological conceptions appealed to; and there are some hints, in early references to 'charms' and 'cures' of Orpheus,²³ that Orpheotelests may also have offered help with the ills of this world.

We can now bring the problem of the unity of Orphism into sharper focus. The sceptical claim that Orphic poems have nothing in common except a spurious paternity is too extreme: it neglects the patterns that can be observed in the subjects that they treated; and it says nothing of the possibility that the books were moulded into a particular shape by their association with ritual practice. Genuine uncertainties exist, but within a more limited area than radical scepticism implies. Orphic poets shared a subject-matter, or range of subject-matters: did they share also a particular approach to these subjects? Was all Orphic eschatology, for instance, based on a particular doctrine about the nature of man and the soul? Were all Orphic poems composed for ritual use? And what of their relation to other pseudonymous religious literature? Did two poems of Orpheus necessarily have more in common with one another than with a poem of Musaïos or Eumolpos or Epimenides?

These questions, unfortunately, cannot be answered. Almost nothing is known about most early Orphic poems beyond their titles. There is no knowing to what extent they were written in a bunch, in a single milieu perhaps, or in different places over a period of, say, 150 years. The rather small number of doctrines that are attributed to 'Orpheus' by sources before 300 BC are usually not ascribed to particular works. We are in no position, therefore, to distinguish between different tendencies within this literature. The question about the unity of Orphism must be left unanswered.

That conclusion may appear discouraging: the subject of this chapter is one that may or may not exist. Orphic rites, however, conducted by Orpheus-initiators, certainly did take place, and in that sense there certainly was an Orphism. What is indeterminable is the extent to which the whole of Orphic literature was related to that ritual practice.

We turn now to Orphic doctrine: that is to say, doctrines that appeared in usually unidentifiable Orphic poems. The most precious of the scarce early allusions we owe to Plato. He mentions Orphic vegetarianism (as does Euripides);²⁴ he introduces, as we have seen, the wandering priests who perform initiations, 'in accord with books of Orpheus', that will ensure their clients a better lot in the afterlife; above all, he suggests in *Cratylus* that 'those around Orpheus' gave the body its present name, **σῶμα**, 'on the grounds that the soul is being punished for the crimes it is punished for, and has the body as a fence to keep (**σῶζω**) it, like a prison'.²⁵ The etymology is no more serious than all the others proposed in *Cratylus*; it shows none the less that, for Plato, Orpheus saw the soul as an alien element within the body, the body as a prison and a place of punishment for the soul.

Aristotle adds two isolated doctrines which he ascribes to 'the so-called poems of Orpheus': that the body is formed like the weaving of a net, and that the soul enters the body from the universe, borne on the winds, when breath is drawn (F 26, 27). His pupil Eudemos mentions an Orphic cosmogony in which the first principle is night (F 28); and a speech in the Demosthenic corpus cites Orpheus for the view that Justice sits beside the throne of Zeus (F 23). A few still more unrevealing details aside, this was until recently almost²⁶ the sum of the firm early evidence for the content of Orphic poems. To go further, one had to add in either doctrines that were attested early, but without the name of Orpheus; or those that were indeed ascribed to him, but only in much later sources. The position was

transformed in 1962 by the discovery, at Derveni near Thessalonike in Macedonia, of a papyrus scroll dating apparently from the second half (and probably the last quarter) of the fourth century BC; this 'Derveni papyrus', paradoxically preserved on the edge of a funeral pyre, is thus one of the oldest surviving Greek books. Three columns were published soon after the discovery, but an official publication of the remaining twenty columns is still awaited; an unauthorized text, very ably edited, has however been available since 1982.²⁷

The importance of the Derveni papyrus is that it allows the subject of the Orphic *Theogony* to be reopened on a quite new basis.²⁸ The existence of such a theogony had always been known, but there had been an almost complete lack of early material from which to reconstruct it. Late evidence abounded, above all in the writings of Neoplatonists; but it was clear that by late antiquity several Orphic theogonies were known, far from clear to what extent any of these reproduced a classical original. Damascius, for instance, in the fifth century AD distinguished three Orphic 'theologies': one recorded by Aristotle's pupil Eudemos, which began (a rare nugget of early information) from night (F 28); another which appears in the *Orphic Rhapsodies* and which he refers to (evidently correctly, as much other evidence shows) as 'the familiar Orphic theology' of his day (F 60); and a third 'according to Hieronymus and Hellanicus' (F 54). Yet other versions can be traced in various sources, with more or less plausibility. The second of Damascius' theologies, the 'rhapsodic theogony' as it is now known, extended apparently to the startling total of twenty-four 'rhapsodies' or books, and for late antiquity was the Orphic text *par excellence*. But in verbal formulation many of the quite numerous fragments are evidently post-classical. The Derveni papyrus provides at last a foundation on which to begin (though not, alas, to complete) the reconstruction of the archaic original of this central Orphic text.

The work it contains is of a remarkable type. Most of the surviving text²⁹ has the form of a commentary on the *Theogony* of Orpheus, based on the premise that 'all his poetry is a riddling account of reality',³⁰ its indirection deriving, however, not merely from obscurantism but from the poet's need to express his rare insights in the common language of his day.³¹ The poem's accounts of divine marriages and conflicts and the like turn out to be descriptions of the physical world, anticipations of the doctrines of various Presocratic philosophers (whom, however, the commentator does not name). Thus the authority of Orpheus' name is secured for the physics of a later age; and, what is perhaps more important,³² Orpheus himself turns out despite all appearances not to have told scandalous tales about the gods.

This remarkable text increases our knowledge in two ways. On the one hand, the commentary takes its place as the first substantial document in the history of Greek allegory (it also illustrates an early response to the ideas of Anaxagoras and others); on the other, it contains embedded within it actual fragments of the Orphic *Theogony*. These two gains appear to be quite distinct. Of course, commentaries on religious texts are often themselves intended for religious use; and Orphic literature by its esoteric character positively invites exegesis by those who purvey it.³³ But it is hard to see a practising Orpheotelest finding this particular commentary very helpful. A scandalous story about the gods becomes, in the author's hands, not an unscandalous story about the gods, but rather about physics; and he speaks with scorn (col. xvi) of

the way in which clients of ‘those who make a profession out of rites’ (i.e. Orpheotelests) are left completely unenlightened about the meaning of those rites. If the commentator thought of himself as an Orphic, he was surely one of a very singular stamp. For our purposes, he is just the misty glass through which we seek to gaze at Orpheus.

Some nineteen verses of Orpheus are quoted in the commentary, and a few phrases. These are but meagre scraps, and to give them a context a little information about the theogony as it appears in later sources is needed. First, however, let us note that the commentator appears (if a plausible supplement of a fragmentary text is correct) to quote (iii. 8) one of the most famous of Orphic verses, ‘I shall sing to those who understand. Bar your ears, you uninitiated’ (F 334). The context of the line was hitherto unknown, but we can now guess with some hope of being right that it stood at the start of the *Theogony* (from which almost all the other verses quoted in the commentary are apparently taken). If so, it follows that one would be wrong to distinguish two strands in Orphism, one concerned with the origin of the world and of gods, one with religious mysteries and the fate of the soul; for we now seem to see that the *Theogony* itself claimed to be a secret poem. The commentator implies the same when, as we have noted, he attacks the way in which ‘those who make a profession out of rites’ fail to explain the true meaning of those rites to their clients. This polemic is irrelevant to the commentator’s concerns, unless the despised ‘professionals’ did indeed make use, misguided use in his view, of Orpheus’ poem. That is to say, the books taken to the doors of the rich by Plato’s wandering priests may have been of just this type.

In its central portion, the Orphic theogony of later tradition preserved the myth of a ‘succession in heaven’ known from Hesiod. It did nothing to mitigate the scandals (as they came to seem) of that myth: the castration of the first ruler Ouranos by his son Kronos, that Kronos who in turn ate his own children and was eventually bound and deposed by his own rebellious son Zeus. Indeed, it extended the list, making Zeus too castrate his father, and mate with his mother Rhea and his daughter Persephone.³⁴ Isocrates in the fourth century declared that Orpheus deserved his horrific end, torn to pieces while still alive, since he more than any other poet had ‘told stories about the gods such as no-one would venture to tell about their enemies ...eating of children and castration of fathers and intercourse with mothers’.³⁵ Such outrages must already have been recounted, therefore, in the old Orphic theogony. Religious thought in the sixth century seems to have become polarized between the purification of myth associated with Xenophanes and this Orphic celebration of horrors. It was doubtless because Orphic doctrines belonged to mysteries that they were so rich in scandals. In a biting satire on the ‘piety’ which judged Socrates a heretic, Plato shows Euthyphron, a seer, speaking cheerily of such stories to Socrates. ‘But in the name of friendship, do you really believe that these things happened?’, asks Socrates. ‘Yes, indeed, and others yet more extraordinary, which most people do not know about,’ Euthyphron answers complacently.³⁶ The unfamiliar myths to which he alludes are very likely to have been Orphic.

Traces—not very revealing—of the Succession in Heaven duly appear among the new Derveni fragments. But the great novelty of the later Orphic theogony lay in the additions that it made to the Hesiodic myth at beginning and end; and the great

importance of the Derveni papyrus is that it seems to prove, at last, that at least the first of these expansions was already present in some form in the old Orphic poem. In the rhapsodic theogony, Hesiod's first king Ouranos had two predecessors: his immediate predecessor Night, and before Night, much more important, a brilliant 'first born' (*protogonos*) creature who bore many names (chief among them in later writers Phanes); for convenience we can call him Protogonos. With the emergence of Protogonos, the generation of gods and the shaping of the universe began. Later, however, Zeus on the advice of Night swallowed Protogonos, and with him in some sense the whole universe; he then re-created the world from his stomach.

Two fragments together make it almost certain that this myth (or a close relative of it) was told in the old poem. One of the crucial fragments has, indeed, been interpreted in quite different ways, because the single verse that the commentator quotes is incomplete in sense:

αἰδοῖον κατέπινεν ὃς αἰθέρα ἔκθορε πρῶτος

(ix. 4)

It tells how somebody swallowed (*κατέπινεν*) something, but the somebody is not named, and the something can be taken in two ways, depending on whether the object *αἰδοῖον* is taken as an adjective, 'reverend', or as a noun, 'genital organ'. So the context can be completed and the line translated to say either that <Zeus> 'swallowed the reverend <king>, who first leapt into the heavens' or that <Kronos> 'swallowed the genital organ <of the king> who first leapt into the heavens'. Initially the second rendering was accepted, partly because the ancient commentator appeared to do so, partly because of a tempting parallel: in a Hittite/Hurrian version of the Succession in Heaven myth, Kumarbi (the equivalent to Kronos) not only castrated the sky-god but also swallowed his phallus. But in Greek myth there is no parallel for such phallus-swallowing; it is not certain that the Derveni commentator took the lines in the way supposed; and the first rendering is linguistically much superior: the word order is less forced, and 'who first leapt into the heavens' is much more apt as a description of Protogonos, the first material being, than of the sky itself.³⁷

The second relevant fragment, the longest that is quoted, runs (xii. 3–6):

the reverend first-born (*protogonos*) king; and to him (? Zeus)
all the immortal blessed gods and goddesses were joined
and the rivers and lovely springs and everything else
all things that then existed. And he (Zeus) became the only one.

This strikingly resembles a fragment of the rhapsodic theogony (F 167), which tells how:

and so, swallowing the strength of first-born Erikepaios [*another of*
Protogonos' names]
 he had the body of everything inside his own hollow belly
 and he mixed into his own limbs the god's power and strength.
 And so along with him everything was fashioned again inside Zeus
 the gleaming height of the broad aither and heaven,
 the seat of the unharvested sea and glorious earth,

great Ocean and Tartarus, depth of the earth,
and rivers and the boundless sea and all other things
and all the immortal blessed gods and goddesses
all things that existed and would exist later...

Several exact verbal borrowings, italicized above, prove that the second passage in fact ultimately derives from the first; and it is natural to suppose that the original context was the same. In the Derveni poem as in later tradition it was doubtless on the advice of Night, who is mentioned as 'prophesying' (cols, vi-vii), that Zeus swallowed Protogonos.

A difficulty must, however, be acknowledged. If in the Derveni poem Heaven was preceded by Night and Protogonos, what of a verse quoted in the papyrus (x. 6): 'Night-born heaven, he who was king first'? This is not in itself a fatal objection; for even in later sources traces exist of a conception by which Protogonos and Night existed but did not count as actual rulers of the gods or of heaven (there being in fact, at that early stage in the history of the universe, very little to rule over).³⁸ But what then of the description of the god who was swallowed as 'first-born reverend *king* (xii. 3)? 'King', we counter, must here be used loosely, as a mere title of respect. That may sound like special pleading. But the alternative³⁹ is to suppose that the swallowed god was in fact Heaven (though described as first-born, *protogonos*); and that the description of this otherwise unattested event was later transferred, verbatim in part, to the swallowing of Protogonos. That is yet harder to believe.

But whence came Protogonos, and what was he? Later sources give spectacular answers to these questions: he burst forth from a shining egg that was created within Aither by unaging Time; he was winged, bisexual, had four eyes and horns, and the heads of ram, bull, lion and serpent. Alas, the papyrus has not wholly freed us from the old problem of deciding in what degree late material can be safely rerejected. The main difference is that we now see more clearly the relation between the old Orphic theology and its successors. Two passages found in the Derveni papyrus reappear, but in much expanded form, among the fragments quoted from the rhapsodic theology. (One, the account of the swallowing of the world along with Protogonos, has been cited already; the other will follow.) The Orphic theology was in truth, it seems, what the Homeric poems have often been supposed to be, a traditional book which grew by a process of successive additions to a nucleus.

The additions that can be observed are, it is true, mere verbal expansions; and one might argue that enough of the narrative of the rhapsodic theology is now attested in the Derveni poem to confirm the view, expressed long ago, that in their content if not their verbal form the rhapsodies are a compendium of ancient Orphic material.⁴⁰ But a frumpish positivist will not be swayed by such considerations; and even a thinking person might hesitate to extend the argument to the kind of detail on which much may hang. Was the archaic Protogonos bisexual in form, for instance? And was he identified with Dionysus? At best one can appeal, with varying force, to analogy, to the logic of the narrative, to possible echoes, to possible sources. To give some examples: it is highly likely that Protogonos emerged, a shining winged figure, from an egg, since Eros appears thus, from a cosmic egg, in a pseudo-philosophical context in Aristophanes' *Birds*.⁴¹ It is credible that the egg was created by Time,

given that the 'theocosmogony' of a sixth-century writer, Pherekydes of Syros, appears to begin with that principle.⁴² But here a different comparison suggests a different conclusion; for Aristophanes' egg was born of Night, and the Orphic theogony known to Eudemos in the late fourth century began with Night likewise (F 28). Either then we must abandon Time, or allow (what is indeed very possible) that there existed at least two Orphic theogonies by the late fourth century. By analogy again with Aristophanes' egg-born Eros, Protogonos was perhaps already an Eros-like power.⁴³ Further parallels for various details, possible sources indeed for the Orphic conceptions, emerge if one looks east to Egyptian or Persian or Phoenician mythology.⁴⁴ But, other difficulties aside, the chronology of the relevant Iranian or Phoenician conceptions is often as controversial as that of the Orphic texts themselves; if there was influence, it may have gone the other way, and at quite a late date.

What is the meaning of the early stages of the Orphic cosmogony? In particular, do the divergences from Hesiod display a consistent tendency? Do they embody a distinctive and unorthodox religious vision?⁴⁵ These would doubtless be hard questions to answer even if a full text of the old Orphic theogony survived. We must fumble with them, none the less; for if such issues are neglected, the study of the subject is little more than a study of quaint curiosities.

In the Orphic cosmology, it can be said, there is less randomness, less formlessness, at the beginning of things than in the Hesiodic. First there is (perhaps) Time, a principle of order; in one branch of the later tradition Time is linked with Necessity.⁴⁶ Time creates an egg, a perfect form, an emblem of life. From the egg emerges a being of spectacular attributes, Protogonos. Here the contrast with Hesiod is very marked. In Hesiod's account, personal gods, in contrast to natural phenomena such as Heaven and Earth, scarcely emerge until quite an advanced stage. Protogonos bestraddles the world before the world exists. All that is arises, in a sense, from and because of him.

It has indeed been suggested that the great religious originality of the Orphic theogony lay in the introduction of a creator-god.⁴⁷ In Hesiod, as is well known, the universe simply occurs; its parts emerge from one another, with rare exceptions, either by a kind of natural process or through sexual generation. Several fragments of the rhapsodic theogony, by contrast, reveal Protogonos 'fashioning' or 'devising' parts of the world: sun (F 88, 96), moon (91), abodes for gods and men (89, 94, 108). By good fortune, a phrase quoted in the Derveni papyrus (col. xix) speaks of someone 'devising' Ocean and probably Achelous too. Of course, a creator-god is central to the Judaeo-Christian tradition; and the early Christian father Lactantius was already keen to enlist Orpheus as, in this regard, an involuntary witness to eternal truth (F 88). We by contrast must guard against overvaluing such elements in Orphism as happen to anticipate Christianity. Protogonos did not, for instance, 'make heaven and earth' after the fashion of *Genesis*, whatever Lactantius may claim; they were born of him by sexual generation after the old Hesiodic manner, which retained its importance as a creative principle alongside 'devising'. None the less, the new Derveni evidence secures for the Orphic theogony an early (if perhaps marginal) place in the history of Greek ideas of cosmic design. A similar idea may have been expressed, in the sixth century, through Pherekydes of Syros' image of a robe, woven by Zeus, depicting the world.⁴⁸

But does it matter to an ordinary worshipper whether the universe is a product of

occurrence or design? For practical religion, Orpheus' portrayal of the power relations between the gods might be more important. Here something of a paradox can be observed. For Hesiod, the universe moves from rough beginnings to its culmination in the rule of Zeus, just and mighty. The Orphic theogony introduces an impressive personal god long before Zeus; and, as we shall see, it adds a further incident at the end of the story, the proposed reign of Dionysus. The tendency of the narrative might seem to be to diminish Zeus' unique glory. But the evidence is unambiguous that this was not the Orphic position. 'Him first, him last, him midst and without end': Milton's verse derives from a famous Orphic *magnificat*, which credited Zeus with absolute power by listing the opposites which he embodied and reconciled (F 21a, 168). A prototype of this hymn now appears in the Derveni papyrus (this is the second instance where Derveni verses re-emerge in later Orphic texts in expanded form): Zeus was praised (amid much else no doubt which is lost) as 'fate', as 'first', as 'last', as 'king, swift-thunderbolted ruler of all'; a verse reads 'Zeus is head, Zeus middle, from Zeus all things have been fashioned' (cols. xiii–xv). In the rhapsodic theogony, this hymn to Zeus seems to have arisen out of the swallowing of Protogonos; it provides indeed the best interpretation of that remarkable myth. Everything is in Zeus, everything comes from Zeus: these ideas are expressed, with drastic literalism, in an account which tells how Zeus indeed swallowed, and re-created, everything.

About other meanings this myth may have borne it is hard to speak with confidence. In the physical theory of the fifth-century philosopher Empedocles, the universe passes from a state of solid oneness, the work of love, to one of division and diversity, the work of strife, and (on the common view) back again, in a perpetual cycle. Some see a similar movement in the Orphic myth, from the unity of the egg through the diversity of the world created by Protogonos back to the reunification of everything within Zeus: 'and Zeus became the only one', Zeus alone was. Orpheus then would be wrestling in his own way with the problem of the 'one and the many' that was so central to Presocratic speculation.⁴⁹ But is that proto-philosophical context the right one in which to locate Orphism, if only on the margins? The wellknown links between 'Orphic' and 'Pythagorean', as well as titles such as *Robe* and *Net* and *Physics*, suggest that some Orphic poems may indeed belong there. But it may be what philosophers call a 'category mistake', like that made by the Derveni commentator, to try to transpose the raw myths of the Theogony into a natural-philosophical key. What indeed are we to make of the rawness of these myths, a scandal to the Greeks? Was a means of interpreting them available by which incest was not incest, castration not castration? On the surface of the poem, at least, there was none such, to judge from Isocrates' outrage.⁵⁰

It would be relevant to all these issues to know what, for the Orphic poet, a 'god' was. In the rhapsodic theogony, Protogonos/Phanes is also called Metis and Erikepaïos and Eros,⁵¹ and even contains within him 'mighty Bromios and all-seeing Zeus' (F 170); Dionysus too is also called Phanes and Erikepaïos (F 170); Rhea, Zeus' mother, 'becomes' Demeter in order to be his wife (F 145). The Derveni commentator is an enthusiast for such identifications, believing Earth and Mother and Rhea and Hera and Demeter to be 'the same', and quotes in support of his view a verse from 'the *Hymns*', presumably of Orpheus, which consists of a string of divine names: 'Demeter, Rhea, Earth, Mother, Hearth, Deo' (col. xviii). The

author of the verse was probably identifying these goddesses with one another; it is hard to see what other purpose his list could have served. Then there is the plot of Aeschylus' play *Bassarai*: Orpheus was induced by what he had seen in the underworld to turn away from the worship of Dionysus, and to treat Sun/Apollo as the greatest god instead; Dionysus, enraged, caused his female devotees the Bassarids to tear the renegade limb from limb. This Orpheus of Aeschylus is a true Orphic in that he is a religious extremist, a sectarian, a devotee of a 'greatest god' other than Zeus; a strange Orphic, by contrast, in his exaltation of Apollo over Dionysus.⁵² What concerns us here, however, is that we are explicitly told that the Orpheus of the play identified Apollo and the Sun. Probably then such assimilations were characteristic of early Orphic poetry as well as of late. (If so, the Derveni commentator and his author were for once in sympathy!) Two conclusions follow. More generally, the practice of making such identifications (otherwise first attested, perhaps, in Aeschylus' *Prometheus Vinculus*, 210) may have had its origin in Orphic mysticism. More specifically, the Orphic myth of succession in heaven takes on a new colour if Protogonos and Zeus and Dionysus are in some sense the same god, if Zeus was implicit in Protogonos and Protogonos reincarnated in Dionysus. 'In my beginning is my end, in my end is my beginning'.

The Orphic poets, it has been argued, re-imagined the Greek pantheon from top to bottom: the familiar figures remain, but subtle shifts in their relations transform the meaning of the whole.⁵³ That important theme cannot be investigated here. We turn instead to the other major Orphic modification to Hesiod's myth. Just as Protogonos was added at the start, so the sequence of rulers in heaven was extended at the end: Zeus was succeeded by Dionysus, or such at least had been Zeus' intention. We arrive here at a myth which has often been thought to embody the very core of Orphism. The Dionysus in question was a son of Zeus, as in the standard myth: but his mother was Persephone, Zeus' own daughter, not Semele; and in the Orphic version Dionysus' mother Persephone too was the product of an incestuous union, of Zeus with his mother Rhea.⁵⁴ According to the rhapsodic theogony, Zeus decided to appoint this Dionysus, though still a baby, his successor, and the little god reigned for a few days. The Titans, jealous, lured Dionysus with toys, slew, cooked and ate him. Learning this, Zeus destroyed the Titans by thunderbolt; from the soot deposited by the smoke arising from these burning sinners emerged mankind. Zeus was able to use the young god's heart, which the Titans had spared and Athena had preserved, in order to re-create and re-vivify his son (F 205–20).

On a further crucial point the sources are frustratingly vague. Did the revived Dionysus succeed his father, as Zeus had originally intended? When 'the rulers of heaven according to Orpheus' account' are listed, Dionysus sometimes appears in sixth place, after Zeus (F 107). If that is literally accurate, an Orphic poet taught what was perhaps the most radical doctrine conceivable within the framework of traditional Greek polytheism: that the world in its present state was controlled by a power other than Zeus. But how is such radicalism to be reconciled with reverence for Zeus as 'him first, him last, him midst and without end'? And no actual events of the reign of Dionysus are recorded.

A different conception appears in the deliberately paradoxical phrasing of F 218:⁵⁵

κραῖνε μὲν οὖν Ζεὺς πάντα πατήρ, Βάκχος δ' ἐπέκρανε

So father Zeus brought all things to fulfilment, and after him Bacchos brought them to full fulfilment.

At some time, therefore, Zeus and Dionysus ruled together, neither clearly superior to the other. The idea even of joint-rule of our present world would be a very radical innovation. But the fragment is phrased in the past tense, and probably refers to the few days that preceded the Titans' crime. Perhaps the 'reign of Dionysus' lasted no longer than that. Some suppose, by contrast, that the dyarchy of Dionysus and Zeus resumed when the young god was brought back to life. But Proclus, perhaps the keenest student of the rhapsodic theology there has ever been, says in a *Hymn* that it was as the son of Semele that Dionysus was reborn.⁵⁶ In that case, the Dionysus of the present world was by birth the same for Orpheus as for orthodoxy. His powers may not have differed either.

The myth of the dismemberment of Dionysus concluded the rhapsodic theology, or nearly so, and so can be seen as the goal to which the whole work tended. It introduced an element notoriously absent from Hesiod's theology, an account of the origin of mankind. We are, it seems, of an origin tainted but divine, formed from the very substance of the murderous Titans. This much certainly stood in the text of the rhapsodic theology.⁵⁷ It is very doubtful by contrast whether a further inference stood there too, that we are also (in the words of the Neoplatonist Olympiodorus) 'a portion of Dionysus, given that we are formed from the soot of the Titans who ate of his flesh' (F 220); Olympiodorus is the only source for this conception, and he may well be drawing a theological conclusion of his own⁵⁸ rather than simply paraphrasing the poem. As offspring of such ancestors we need a 'release' from the burden of ancestral guilt (F 232); and the god who can provide it is Dionysus (F 229, 232), who is always a god of 'release'—though usually from the burden of care and inhibition—and who as actual victim of the Titans' crime is (one may suppose) peculiarly fitted to pardon the descendants of its perpetrators. He is also, of course, our kinsman, if Olympiodorus is justified in claiming that we are a 'portion of Dionysus' as well as of the Titans. Thus the myth of Dionysus makes sense of that association between 'Orphic' and 'Dionysiac' which we have already discussed; it also explains why the Orphic theology, in contrast for instance to Hesiod's, could be deployed in a context of initiation and mysteries.

This is why it has been seen as the Orphic 'arch-myth': it founds Orphism's claim to be a religion of salvation, a religion which, by treating our present condition as a consequence of guilt, offers the hope that if we can efface that guilt we can accede to a condition that is altogether superior. Indeed, the Orphic doctrine that the body is a prison-house or place of punishment is incoherent unless a primal crime is identified, for which mankind is now being made to pay. It will not do to say that individuals are expiating their own crimes in past existences, or their ancestors', as this leads to an eternal regress: for why had they or their ancestors been consigned to the prison-house of those past incarnations?⁵⁹ The myth is the linchpin of the Orphic message of salvation: sceptics have therefore done their best to pull it out. It is not attested until the third century BC; it did not exist until then, they conclude.

In response to this sceptical attack, the hunt has been on for possible allusions in earlier centuries. In a fragment quoted from a 'lament', Pindar declares that the best roles in future incarnations will fall to those 'from whom Persephone accepts compensation for ancient grief. No myth is known which really explains the allusion except that of the murder of Persephone's son Dionysus by man's ancestors. Again, Plato speaks of decadent individuals as 'displaying the so-called ancient Titanic nature'; and his pupil Xenokrates, commenting on his master's allusion to the Orphic doctrine of the body as a prison-house, explained—a little obscurely, it is true—that the prison was 'Titanic and culminated in Dionysus'.⁶⁰ Finally, an Attic vase of the early fourth century appears to show the baby Dionysus with Persephone, not Demeter, as his mother.⁶¹ The sceptical case has, therefore, always been far from decisive. But a faith grounded on such fugitive allusions cannot be wholly secure either.

No account of the rending of Dionysus appears among the Derveni fragments, unfortunately. The latest event that they mention (col. xxii) is Zeus' lust to sleep with his mother Rhea/Demeter (lines the shockingly plain meaning of which the commentator is at pains to deny); chance draws a veil over the sequel, the papyrus ending there. As we have seen, in later tradition the fruit of this union was that Persephone with whom Zeus then mated to beget Dionysus, the Dionysus whom the Titans slew. If there is a kind of logic in these acts of incest, whereby Zeus' coupling with his mother implies also that with his daughter, the Derveni poem must have gone on to tell of these events (as is indeed highly likely on general grounds, given what we now know about the derivation of the rhapsodic theogonies from the earlier text).⁶² But we can also turn to new evidence from a quite different quarter, two identical gold leaves, dating apparently from the second half of the fourth century, which were found in a grave in Thessaly and first published in 1987. First, however, a word will be necessary about the nature of these 'gold leaves', seventeen of which are now known.⁶³

They are, in fact, tiny strips of inscribed gold leaf that are found in graves, often on the chest of the corpse. Specimens have been found in Italy, in Crete and in Thessaly; that is to say, so far at any rate, from the margins of the Greek world. They are, as it were, passports to the underworld; and the messages that they bear, in hexameter verse, are broadly of two types. In one (known so far, with one late exception, from specimens found at Thurii in southern Italy) the soul itself addresses the powers of the underworld:

I come, pure from the pure, o queen of the chthonians,
(and) Eukles and Eubouleus and other god *daimones*.
For I too claim to be of your blessed race.
I have paid the penalty for unjust deeds,
whether fate overcame me or the thrower of thunderbolts.
But now I have come a suppliant to reverend Persephone,
so that she may send me with favour to the abode of the pure.
(Tablet A 2 Zuntz)

One specimen of this type concludes with a greeting addressed to the soul, followed by what seems to be a mystic formula (it breaks the hexameter metre) spoken by the soul itself, the meaning of which, naturally enough, we cannot explain very confidently:

‘Happy and blessed one, you shall be a god instead of a mortal. I have fallen a kid into the milk’ (A 1 lines 8–9).

The other main type (which may have been influenced by the Egyptian *Book of the Dead*⁶⁴) contains instructions to the dead man:

You will find on the left of the house of Hades a spring,
and standing beside it a white cypress.
To this spring do not even go near.
But you will find another, cold water flowing
from the pool of memory. In front of it are guards.
Tell them: I am a child of Earth and starry Heaven;
but I am of heavenly stock. This you yourselves know.
I am parched and perishing with thirst. Give me at once
cold water flowing from the pool of memory.
And they will themselves give you (water) to drink from the sacred spring,
and then you will rule among the other heroes.

(B 2)

It has always been obvious that there is some affinity between the gold leaves and the kind of Orphic doctrines that we have been considering. The soul claims to be of ‘heavenly’ origin; it declares that it has ‘paid the penalty for unjust deeds’. Purchasers might naturally have supposed the author of hexameter verses of such content to have been Orpheus; and the appearance of gold leaves of almost identical content up and down the Greek world ceases to be a mystery if we suppose that wandering Orpheus-initiators carried them in their bags. Suggestive too is a South Italian vase found at Taranto, which shows an old man seated in what seems to be his tomb; in front of him Orpheus (a common presence in funerary contexts in the art of Taranto) plays his lyre, and the old man holds in his left hand a scroll which is, it has been suggested, the painter’s way of evoking a passport to the underworld such as the gold leaves.⁶⁵ But despite all these pointers, proof positive of an association between the leaves and Orphic rites has been lacking. In 1974 a leaf of mid-fifth-century date was discovered at Hipponium, near the toe of Italy, which promised the soul that after drinking from the proper pool in the underworld ‘you too will follow the sacred path on which other initiates (μύσται) and *bakkhoi* go, glorious.’⁶⁶ This brings us a step closer to Orphism: the reference to ‘initiates’ suggests that the leaves are associated with ‘initiations’, that to ‘*bakkhoi*’ shows that these initiations were Dionysiac. But the decisive evidence comes from the yet more newly discovered leaves from Pelinna in Thessaly.⁶⁷ By their very form, they declare their allegiance to Dionysus: they are shaped like tiny leaves of ivy, the sacred plant of Dionysus. The text runs:

Now have you died and now have you been born, thrice blessed, on this day.
Say to Persephone that Bakkhios himself has released you.
You have leapt, a bull, into the milk.
You have leapt, a goat, into the milk.
You have fallen, a ram, into the milk.
You have wine, fortunate one [].
An end awaits you such as the rest of the blessed (have).

(Reading and interpretation of the last two lines are very uncertain.)

The first line takes ideas that are conventional in milieux such as this—blessings await the soul even after death, the soul will be reborn—and compresses them into a thrilling paradox: the very moment of death is a moment of birth, a reason for congratulation.⁶⁸ But it is the second line that is crucial for our purposes (provided only that the difficult text has been correctly deciphered). The soul has been ‘released’ by <Dionysus> Bacchios himself, through participation no doubt in the rites of Dionysus the Releaser. But why the insistence that the soul should ‘tell Persephone’ that ‘Dionysus himself has released it? What is Dionysus to Persephone? The answer surely lies in the Orphic myth, in regard to which the soul is urged to use an *a fortiori* argument: ‘guilty though I am before Dionysus, the mother of the victim can have no complaint against me, since the victim himself has released me.’ One reader of the rhapsodic theogony in fact described the rites with which it was associated as ‘initiations to Dionysus and Persephone’.⁶⁹

Two conclusions follow: the myth of Dionysus’ dismemberment was indeed available to be appealed to by a fallen soul seeking salvation in the fourth century BC; and the gold leaves are indeed in some sense Orphic texts. Those who had been initiated from Orphic books in life took such leaves with them, we infer, to the grave. (As the new Thessalian leaves and that from Hipponium were found in women’s graves, it further follows that Orphic initiations were open to both sexes.) Of course, these conclusions strictly apply only to the two Thessalian leaves, not to the whole set. But the Thessalian leaves have points of contact with both of the other two types of gold leaf (between which they provide a bridge⁷⁰), and it would be odd if the Orphic elements alone were peculiar to them. Indeed one can reverse the argument and observe that the new text strengthens the case for seeking Orphic doctrines in the other leaves. In those of the second type, the soul claims to be a ‘child of earth and of starry heaven; but I am of heavenly stock’. By insisting that the heavenly portion prevails over the earthly, the soul sets the one against the other in an interestingly dualist way. But this dualist polarization is perhaps being applied to a specific traditional genealogy. There were many ‘children of earth and heaven’ in myth, among them the Titans; possibly it is as a Titan or ex-Titan that the soul here speaks.⁷¹ In leaves of the first type too, the soul speaks of death by lightning, the fate of the Orphic Titans.

As has often been noted, there is a remarkable similarity between the Orphic myth and the account of his own destiny given in the fifth century by Empedocles of Akragas. Empedocles was a natural philosopher in the Presocratic tradition, and at the same time a religious visionary, an admirer of Pythagoras.⁷² A tribute to Pythagoras survives in his own words (fr. 129);⁷³ like Pythagoras, he saw animal sacrifice as an abomination (frs. 136–7, cf. 128), no doubt because like him he held that souls transmigrated between species (fr. 117): so to sacrifice an animal is in a sense to kill a kinsman. But a remarkable claim also appears in him which is unparalleled in what we know (admittedly very little) of Pythagoras. Empedocles is himself a god, a *daimon*, in exile:

There is an oracle of necessity, an ancient decree of the gods
eternal, sealed by broad oaths:
whenever a god in folly pollutes his dear limbs with bloodshed
—one of those who have been allotted a life of long ages—
he must wander for thirty thousand seasons away from the blessed ones

growing over time into every kind of mortal form,
exchanging one hard path of life for another...
That path I now walk, an exile from the gods and a wanderer
who trusted in mad strife.

(fr. 115)⁷⁴

In his exiled state he has passed through a series of lives:

I have been a boy and a girl
and a bush and a bird and a mute fish of the sea...

(fr. 117)

His first incarnation was a grim awakening:

I wept and wailed when I saw the unfamiliar place...

(fr. 118)

The body in which he is now clothed is 'an alien tunic of flesh' (fr. 126). And the whole human race had, it seems, no good origin in Empedocles' thought:

alas, wretched race of mortals, miserably unblessed,
from such strife and such lamentations were you born...

(fr. 124)

But now he is on the point of release:

I walk among you a deathless god, no longer a mortal...

(fr. 112)

Indeed he exercises supernatural powers: if attentive, his pupil Pausanias will learn how to stay the winds and 'bring back from Hades the strength of a dead man' (fr. 111).

Empedocles, of course, is not simply transcribing Orphic doctrine. The crime for which he is in exile is not that of the Titans; and the message which he brings to his fellow citizens is not, it seems, that they are all like himself fallen gods. None the less, the basic form of the Orphic myth and of Empedocles' personal myth is strikingly similar: both are stories of a paradise lost through guilt, of the entry of an exiled divinity or its offspring into a world, ours, which is fundamentally alien to its nature. In neither case, however, should one stress the sense of guilt alone: for in both the loss of paradise is the premise which prepares for the conclusion that paradise can be regained. Empedocles and, for the Orphic poet, mankind have fallen low indeed; on this they insist, in a way quite alien to ordinary Greek thought. But they are also aiming much higher than the dictates of Greek moderation normally allowed. Neither myth, incidentally, is based on the opposition between pure soul and contaminated body which is so familiar from certain dialogues of Plato and from later Platonism.⁷⁵ The body is, indeed, alien to the soul or the *daimon* or whatever name should be given to the T which pre-exists and enters it; to be in this world and in flesh is a disaster for this T; but its ills originated not in the flesh or the world but in a crime it committed before it was ever encased in mortal form.

Empedocles had rolled from one incarnation to another for 30,000 years. Were similar possibilities envisaged in early Orphic poetry, as they certainly were in the rhapsodic theogony, where an explicit doctrine of metempsychosis is found (F 223–

4)? At first sight the gold leaves suggest the contrary; for the souls that speak through them hope to be ‘sent to the abode of the pure’, to become ‘a god instead of a man’, to ‘rule among the other heroes’ at once. They envisage, therefore, not reincarnation but an immediate and final release. But that is not necessarily incompatible with a doctrine whereby the soul must undergo a finite period of transmigration (as did Empedocles); for it might naturally put to Persephone the most optimistic view of its own case, and claim that it was now ready for release. (Could a working Orpheotelest realistically have suggested anything else to his clients?)

Is there, however, any positive evidence for an early Orphic doctrine of metempsychosis?⁷⁶ Several indications combine to make a very strong case. Plato attributes the doctrine of reincarnation to ‘priests and priestesses who try to give an account of their activities’ and in a different passage associates it with ‘initiations’;⁷⁷ both references seem to point to Orphic poetry or rites. Orphic initiates are said by Euripides’ Theseus to favour ‘soul-less food’ (*Hippolytus* 952): it sounds as if for them, as for Pythagoras and Empedocles, the objection to meat-eating lay in a doctrine that souls migrate between species. As we noted earlier, an Orphic poet taught that the soul enters the body borne on the wind (F 27): it pre-exists in that body therefore, and may have been hitherto in another? Conversely, will one incarnation necessarily be sufficient for the soul to ‘pay the debt’ on account of which it has been enclosed in the body? In the same fragment in which Pindar apparently alludes to the Orphic myth of Dionysus, he also mentions a form of reincarnation (fr. 133). And finally, the soul claims in one of the gold leaves to have escaped from ‘the dire cycle of deep grief’, which is most readily interpreted as the cycle of lives.⁷⁸

With metempsychosis, we have arrived at eschatology, a subject that always claims much space in discussions of Orphism. And not without reason; for Orphic poetry can almost be defined as eschatological poetry, and it was in such poems perhaps that ‘persuasive’ accounts of the afterlife—accounts designed, unlike that in *Odyssey* xi, to influence the hearer’s behaviour in the here and now—were powerfully presented for the first time. One ancient writer in fact maintained that ‘mythology about Hades’ was introduced to Greece by Orpheus (inspired by travel in Egypt).⁷⁹ A surprising number of accounts of the afterlife occur in fifth- and fourth-century literature,⁸⁰ in Pindar and Plato above all. In these, a number of familiar elements are constantly redeployed to form slightly different patterns: reward or punishment in the underworld, for instance, which is commonly seen as the soul’s final and permanent destiny, can be inserted as just a stage through which it passes between incarnations. It is scarcely in doubt that Orphic poems were, in a general way, a powerful influence and inspiration. (There were other relevant sources too, such as the poems of ‘Musaïos’ and ‘Eumolpos’, but these may themselves have been affected by Orphism.) But to trace particular elements to particular sources is speculative work.⁸¹ Let us merely say that Orphic poems certainly contained accounts of judgements, rewards and punishments in the underworld; of a cycle of lives (if we are right about metempsychosis), from which escape could eventually be achieved; and that the ‘purity’ of the soul was doubtless defined in both moral and ritual terms. How these elements were fitted together in individual poems we can only guess. There is anyway much to be said for not worrying too much about the last details of last things. An eschatology is not a contract in law, but an imaginative picture, designed

as we have noted to shape attitudes and behaviour here and now. Pindar and Plato, by changing their accounts of the afterlife from work to work, in a sense acknowledge that the details do not matter and cannot be known. Readers of Orphic eschatologies at one level doubtless felt the same.

We have struggled with the details of the texts. What can be said more generally about the place of early Orphism in history? Its relation to Pythagoreanism is unmistakable; both Pythagoras and 'Orpheus' preached vegetarianism, probably because both also taught the doctrine of metempsychosis; and ancient writers believed that particular Orphic writings were the work of identifiable Pythagoreans, even of Pythagoras himself (T 222). There is also a geographical connection:⁸² Pythagoras taught in southern Italy, and southern Italy has yielded far more gold leaves than any other region; we have already mentioned what looks like a burial place for Orphic initiates at Cumae, and the role of Orpheus himself in South Italian funerary iconography. Empedocles too came from Akragas in Sicily, and Pindar's second Olympian ode, written for Theron the tyrant of Akragas, is unique among his victory odes in containing a detailed account of the afterlife, which even speaks of reincarnation. Eschatology was in the air in Magna Graecia, and Orphic doctrines were taken up there with enthusiasm, whether or not that was their place of origin. (It should certainly be mentioned that there also existed a theory, first clearly attested in the second century AD though doubtless older, that Orphism was in effect invented by Onomakritos, an Athenian 'oracle-collector' who was active at the Pisistratid court late in the sixth century BC. But this may be a mere guess, based on a well-known passage in which Herodotus speaks of Onomakritos as an editor—and forger—of 'oracles of Musaios'.⁸⁴)

In the background stands also Pherekydes of Syros, a slightly earlier thinker who according to some ancient authorities anticipated Pythagoras in teaching metempsychosis.⁸⁵ Pherekydes is comparable to 'Orpheus' in other ways too: his cosmogony, like the Orphic, was still largely mythological; and we have already noted the place that Time and a 'devising' god may have had in both accounts.

The chronological relation of Orphism to Pherekydes and to Pythagoras is very obscure.⁸⁶ The ancients who ascribed Orphic writings to Pythagoras or his followers evidently thought that the sage had lent to Orphism, not borrowed from it. We have no independent reason to accept that judgement, but none to reject it either.⁸⁷ A simple explanation both for the points of contact between Pythagoreanism and Orphism and the points of difference—the one a religious community without texts, the other a group of mystic texts without a community—would be to fit the two together, like two halves of an indenture. Orphism, then, would be Pythagoreanism's voice. But one may hesitate to ascribe to a Pythagorean poet a theogony as mythological in form, as violent and scandalous in content, as that of Orpheus; and there is no sign that Dionysus had especial importance in Pythagoreanism. Orphism is a product, it has therefore been suggested,⁸⁸ of a convergence between Pythagoreanism and a pre-existent tradition of 'Bacchic mysteries'. No such tradition (of Bacchic mysteries for men) is, however, securely attested: the explanation is in danger of treating a product of Orphism as its source. Orphism is closely related to Pythagoreanism without being reducible to it; as for the additional elements, it is best to admit that we cannot determine their date or origin precisely.

Pythagoras, the Orphic poets and Empedocles have been called, with provocative anachronism, the Greek puritans.⁸⁹ They stood aside from the religious norms of their time; they preached asceticism, in some degree; they talked (at least some Orphic writers and Empedocles did: for Pythagoras the evidence is inadequate) of man's inborn guilt; above all, they agreed in seeing the body as no more than an alien receptacle, and this whole world as a mere place of exile, for the true divine self. In this gloomy alienation from the world and the senses, they were, of course, turning traditional Greek assumptions upside down. Equally untraditional, as we have noted, was the ambition with which these puritans aspired to godhead.

The mythological mind often treats what is abnormal as being literally 'alien', of foreign origin. So too does the scholarly mind, and exotic origins for these exotic phenomena have been sought and found: the tradition goes back to Herodotus, who in the long text of 2.81 says that the 'so-called Orphic and Bacchic mysteries' are in reality 'Pythagorean and Egyptian'. For a picturesque period, now regrettably ended, the trance-journeys of Siberian shamans were felt to provide the key to the Orphic doctrine of the soul.⁹⁰ It is normal to note that the idea of metempsychosis emerges in India a little before it does in Greece—and then to have trouble in explaining by what channel the one tradition could have affected the other.⁹¹ The case for particular borrowings has to be considered, and is occasionally good;⁹² but 'influence' or 'borrowing' can never provide more than a partial explanation of cultural change. Foreign thought is not picked up irresistibly, like a foreign disease; and the decision to take up this or that idea always requires an explanation. In fact, all that can plausibly be claimed is that particular elements in Orphism may have been borrowed; the synthesis is Greek, and must be explained in terms of Greek society.

We will certainly not, however, be able to explain it by reference to 'the spirit of the age'. Pythagoras was a contemporary, or nearly so, of Polykrates and gay Anakreon and luxurious Hipparkhos; the puritans remained a tiny minority. Was the new asceticism a reaction, rather, against the dominant culture of the age? Is puritanism a by-product of a self-conscious luxuriousness? Is there a kind of symbiosis between the two things? Empedocles was born in wealthy Akragas; increasing numbers of gold leaves (gold!) have been found in the rich land of Thessaly; and it is at the doors of the rich that Plato's wandering priests peddle their Orphic books.

However that may be, the Greek puritans were rejecting not just the body and the world but, more specifically, central norms of the Greek society of their day. Vegetarianism, it has been well stressed of late, was not a mere matter of individual dietary preference. Animal sacrifice was the basic ritual act of Greek religion, a fundamental means therefore by which any Greek participated in the life of society. To take a typical example: there was no citizenship at Athens without membership of a phratry, but no membership of a phratry without animal sacrifice. To declare oneself a vegetarian was to declare oneself an outsider. A detail of the myth of the Titans and Dionysus gains a new interest in this regard. The Titans, we are told, first boiled and then roasted the limbs of the baby god (F 35). In so doing, they reversed the canonical procedure at a Greek sacrifice, at which the victim's entrails were roasted and the remaining flesh was then boiled. One of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* suggests that this reversal was significant: 'why is it permitted to boil what has been roasted but not to roast what has been boiled?' is the problem, and one

possible solution is 'is it because of what is recounted in the rite (*telete*)?'Z (the Orphic rite, almost certainly). Perhaps, for the faithful, Dionysus' death was not just a murder but more specifically a sacrifice; or rather, a ghastly perversion of sacrifice, a parody of the 'origin of sacrifice' myth of Hesiod, a 'charter myth' designed to explain not an institution but the necessity of rejecting it.⁹³

Orphism can be seen, therefore, as having at its centre a refusal of the values of the city. But was the refusal absolute, or did certain accommodations take place? And did the city in turn reject Orphism? Two partly separate issues arise here, that of the Orpheus-initiators and their clients, and that of the eschatological cults of the cities themselves. We will take the second first.

Thrice blessed are those mortals who witness these rites before passing to Hades. To them alone is life granted there; for the rest there is nothing there but evil.

We alone have sunshine (in the underworld) and bright light, we who have been initiated and who behaved with piety towards guests and ordinary people.⁹⁴

In both cases, the reference is, not to Orphic rites, but to the Eleusinian Mysteries. And the Eleusinian Mysteries, far from being city-rejecting, were perhaps the most sacred cult of the Athenian state. The similarities and differences between the two sets of Mysteries, the extent to which Greeks themselves saw them as being compatible or opposed, need to be analysed with care. The central similarity is of course that both, at about the same time, began to offer to every individual hope of escape from that afterlife of utter emptiness to which almost every soul is condemned in the Homeric poems. Heaven is henceforth open to every man and woman born (so too is hell). On the other hand, much of what is most distinctive in Orphism is absent from Eleusis: asceticism, vegetarianism, metempsychosis, the whole drama of the soul's guilt and redemption. Eleusinian initiates are not required to live in a way that would set them apart from the rest of the city. Nor do they have in the same degree the sense of election, of being gods in exile or gods-to-be. It may seem at this point that the differences decisively outweigh the similarities.⁹⁵

None the less, at least one Attic text of the fourth century and probably two, of no eccentric stamp, treat Orpheus as founder of the Mysteries.⁹⁶ That fact can, it is true, be interpreted in more than one way. Perhaps an Orphic poem on an Eleusinian theme had already been composed which abandoned distinctively Orphic doctrines to concentrate on common ground, such as an account of rewards and punishments in the afterlife.⁹⁷ (It would have been a successor or companion to poems on the same theme by the specifically Eleusinian figures 'Musaïos' and 'Eumolpos'.) Conceivably an Orphic poet had attempted a synthesis by which the Eleusinian Mysteries provided a release from Titanic guilt. Or perhaps Orpheus was introduced not because of a particular poem but because of his general reputation, already attested in an interestingly respectful reference in Aristophanes (*Frogs* 1032), as a founder of 'initiations'. The choice between these options, if it could only be made, would affect our judgement of the unity of Orphism in an important way. Could a

poem abandon metempsychosis and vegetarianism and Titanic guilt and still be 'Orphic'? But on any view we find Orpheus perceived not as a subverter but as a source of civic religious values.

That might also in large measure have been Plato's view. We turn, with Plato, to the Orpheus-initiators. Plato objects, famously, to the ritualism of traditional Greek religion: it teaches that 'gifts sway the gods, gifts sway reverend kings', and that the consequences of crime can be effaced by sacrifice. The seers of book two of the *Republic* who go to the doors of the rich with their 'hubbub of books of Orpheus and Musaios' and their rituals of expiation are offering, not an alternative religion, but traditional religion in a guise which displays its inadequacies particularly clearly.⁹⁸ (Indeed, Plato's whole discussion tends to lump together Eleusinian and Orphic initiation in a way that illustrates again the assimilation we have just discussed.) In hinting here at the practices of the Orpheus-initiators, Plato does not speak of Titanic guilt as the stain to be effaced, but only of the 'unjust acts of an individual or his ancestors'; and as means of expiation he mentions 'playful ritual', not the asceticism of the Orphic life. Of course, between this text and the actual content of Orphic books, two filters obtrude: first that of Plato, who is very likely to have misrepresented the values of the Orpheus-initiators; and second that of the Orpheus-initiators themselves, who were free to select from the texts and interpret them in whatever way they thought would meet their clients' wishes. The relation between 'initiation' and 'justice' (or 'faith' and 'works') as techniques of salvation is a recurrent religious problem; and against Plato's implication that Orpheus favoured initiation alone can be set the testimony of a speech in the Demosthenic corpus that, according to Orpheus, 'Justice sits beside the throne of Zeus and surveys all the doings of men' (25.11, F 23). Indeed, Plato himself elsewhere recognizes the moral demands posed by what appear to be Orphic doctrines.⁹⁹ All that the *Republic* passage provides is one view of one application of the Orphic texts in a particular city at a particular time. But it is still of interest that an observer of Plato's calibre saw not cleavage but continuity between Orphism and traditional religion.

Perhaps we can attempt a final articulation of the relation between Pythagoreanism and Orphism. Both embodied 'puritan' values that were genuinely alien to the norms of Greek life. Pythagoreanism remained apart; Pythagoreans lived together in communities, against which non-Pythagoreans occasionally turned with violence. Orphism, by contrast, went out into the world, through poems that circulated freely, and of course through the activities of Orpheus-initiators. And in the encounter that thus took place between Greek puritanism and Greek civic values, it looks as if puritanism made many of the concessions.

NOTES

- 1 He would be much helped, however, by H.Lloyd-Jones, 'Pindar and the afterlife', *Entretiens Hardt* 31 (1985), 245–83, reprinted with an addendum on the latest 'gold leaf' in his *Greek Epic, Lyric and Tragedy* (Oxford, 1990), 110–53.
- 2 In consequence, even the excellent treatment in W.Burkert, *Greek Religion: Archaic and Classical* (tr. J.Raffan, Oxford, 1985), 290–304, is slightly out of date. There

- is, however, a very recent collection of essays, P.Borgeaud (ed.) *Orphisme et Orphée* (Geneva, 1991).
- 3 Whence the most recent large-scale study (important but controversial), by M.L.West, is called *The Orphic Poems* (Oxford, 1983). The testimonia and fragments are cited (with numbers preceded by T and F respectively) from O.Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta* (Berlin, 1922).
 - 4 952–4: T 213 Kern.
 - 5 364e: F 3 Kern. On the Orphic associations of Plato's ord for sacrifice here, **θυηπολῶ**, see Kern's references ad loc.
 - 6 Cf. the title essay of M.Detienne's collection, *L'écriture d'Orphée* (Paris, 1989), esp. 109–15.
 - 7 On the early history of the myth of Orpheus see F.Graf, 'Orpheus: a poet among men', in J.Bremmer (ed.), *Interpretations of Greek Mythology* (London, 1987), 80–106; J.Bremmer in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 13–30.
 - 8 See e.g. Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1033 and Plato, *Republic* 363c, 364e, with West, *Orphic Poems*, ch. 2.
 - 9 In the passage quoted above: cf. the sarcasm of *Timaëus* 40d–e (F 16 Kern).
 - 10 2.81: T 216. Later sources: an epigram by Damagetus (II, 1383–4 in A.S.F.Gow and D.L.Page, *Hellenistic Epigrams*, Cambridge 1965) is a clear instance from the late third c. BC.
 - 11 I.e. 'haplography', which constantly causes omissions in the manuscripts concerned (cf. H.B.Rosen's edition of Herodotus, Leipzig 1987, lxiv). For a strong defence of the long text see W.Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism* (tr. E.L.Minar, Harvard 1972), 127–8.
 - 12 See p. 494 below.
 - 13 See T 203–11 Kern.
 - 14 So W.Burkert in an excellent discussion, 'Craft versus sect: the problem of Orphics and Pythagoreans', in B.F.Meyer and E.P.Sanders (eds), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition*, III (London, 1982), 1–22.
 - 15 *Laws* 782c, T 212; cf. e.g. G.Casadio's comment in *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 52 (1986), 293.
 - 16 F.Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques, Supplément* (Paris, 1962), no. 120: cf. R.Turcan, in *L'association dionysiaque dans les sociétés anciennes* (Rome, 1986), 227–46.
 - 17 For references see West, *Orphic Poems*, 17–18; and cf. now J.G.Vinogradov in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 77–86.
 - 18 See F.Graf, *Gnomon* 57 (1985), 590 n. 17; L.Zhmud', *Hermes* 120 (1992), 159–60.
 - 19 West, *Orphic Poems*, 3.
 - 20 For a history of trends in Orphic scholarship see K.Prümm, *Zeitschrift für katholische Theologie* 78 (1956), 1–40. E.R.Dodds in *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951), 147, gives a celebrated list of the 'things he once knew' about Orphism. He suggests that the earlier accounts were 'the unconscious projection upon the screen of antiquity of certain unsatisfied religious longings characteristic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries'. But one should not suppose that the voice of the sceptics is merely that of dispassionate reason: they evince considerable distaste for Orphism, I.M.Linforth, for instance, speaking of 'ideas and practices which are repellent to the normal healthy mind' (in his very valuable book, *The Arts of Orpheus*, Berkeley, 1941, 364).
 - 21 See West, *Orphic Poems*, 10–11; and on the mixing-bowl M.J.Edwards, *ZPE* 90 (1992), 55–64.

- 22 Linforth in *Arts of Orpheus* repeatedly (e.g. 67, 170–3, 261–76, 299) uses the association of Orpheus with a wide variety of **τελεταί** as an argument to prove that ‘Orphism’ has no specific content. But the argument can be reversed: even if Orpheus is associated with no specific **τελεταί**, he is specifically associated with **τελεταί**, not with other forms of cult.
- 23 Euripides, *Alcestis* 967, *Cyclops* 646: cf. Burkert, ‘Craft versus sect’ (above, n. 14), 4; Burkert also stresses that the practice of different Orpheotelests, in competition with one another, will not have been uniform.
- 24 Cf. p. 483 above.
- 25 *Crat.* 400c, F 8: on this much-discussed passage see most recently L.J.Alderink, *Creation and Salvation in Ancient Orphism* (American Classical Studies 8, Chico, 1981), 59–65, with the comments of G.Casadio, *Orpheus* 8 (1987), 389–91 and in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 123–5. The same doctrine appears, anonymously, in *Phaedo* 62b, F 7.
- 26 But F 14–15, both from Plato, showed that Orpheus described marriages and generations of gods in traditional mythological mode; Isocrates’ comment on the scandalous use he made of this mode will be mentioned in the text.
- 27 In *ZPE* 47 (1982), following p. 300. For details of the papyrus see West, *Orphic Poems*, 75–7.
- 28 On the debate as it stood prior to the Derveni find see, for instance, W.K.C.Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion* (London, 1935), 69–130.
- 29 But it is not certain that the whole work was a commentary: see W.Burkert, ‘Der Autor von Derveni: Stesimbrotos **Περὶ Τελετῶν**’, *ZPE* 62 (1986), 1–5. (Stesimbrotos is n. 107 in F.Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, IIb, Berlin 1929.)
- 30 Col. ix. 5–6.
- 31 xiv. 7–9, xix. 7–8.
- 32 So rightly M.J.Edwards, *ZPE* 86 (1991), 203–11, at 211 (though with an unconvincing dating after Plato). For another allegorical interpretation of Orphic poetry see F 33 (Epigenes).
- 33 So Detienne, *L’écriture d’Orphée*, 115. For devotional commentary cf. perhaps F 49, a papyrus commentary on a poem credited to Orpheus (though it is in fact what we know as the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*).
- 34 For a useful summary of events in the Rhapsodic Theogony see West, *Orphic Poems*, 70–5. The testimony of the two main Neoplatonic sources, Proclus and Damascius, is discussed by L.Brisson, in J.Pepin and H.-D.Saffrey (eds), *Proclus* (Paris, 1987), 43–104, and in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 157–209.
- 35 11. 38–9, cf. F 17 and J.Rudhardt, ‘De l’inceste dans la mythologie grecque’, *Revue française de psychanalyse* 46 (1982), 731–63; Rudhardt sees such inter-generational divine incest, which is virtually confined to Orphic myth, as ‘sursacralisant’.
- 36 *Euthyphro* 5e–6b: F 17.
- 37 So independently West, *Orphic Poems*, 85 and J.S.Rusten, *HSPb* 89 (1985), 125; on the commentator cf. M.J.Edwards, *ZPE* 86 (1991), 205–7.
- 38 F 107; cf. West, *Orphic Poems*, 234–5.
- 39 F.Graf, *Gnomon* 57 (1985), 588.
- 40 Cf. the views of Gruppe and others cited by Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 78. In addition to points stressed in the text, note how Night, so prominent in the rhapsodic narrative, is already of obvious importance in the Derveni poem. The opposite conception, whereby the rhapsodic theogony is drastically affected in plot as well as in verbal formulation by later philosophical systems, is to be

- found in the writings of L.Brisson, e.g. *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 202 (1985), 399–420 and in Pepin, *Proclus*, 53 n. 11.
- 41 693–7:F 1.
- 42 Cf. H.S.Schibli, *Pherekydes of Syros* (Oxford, 1990), 27–38. But Time enters Orphism only in the second century AD, under the influence of Mithraism, according to L.Brisson, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 170 n. 19, 202 n. 49 (and works there cited).
- 43 Cf. C.Calame, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 227–45 (who also argues from the logic of the narrative that Protogonos/Eros was already bisexual, i.e. capable of sexual generation without a partner).
- 44 This method is central to West, *Orphic Poems*; but see the (as they seem to a non-orientalist) well-informed objections of G.Casadio in a valuable long review, *Studi e materiali di storia delle religioni* 52 (1986), 291–322.
- 45 A question well posed by D.Sabbatucci, *Saggio sul misticismo greco* (Rome, 1965), ch. III, even if his answers can appear forced; cf. too Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 83–4.
- 46 F 54, cf. West, *Orphic Poems*, 194–8.
- 47 So Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 106.
- 48 Cf. Schibli, *Pherekydes of Syros*, 54–7, and in general C.J.Classen, ‘The creator in Greek thought from Homer to Plato’, *C&M* 23 (1962), 1–22.
- 49 See Guthrie, *Orpheus and Greek Religion*, 74–6, reporting Gruppe; cf. (with a different emphasis) West, *Orphic Poems*, 108–9. In a fragment of the rhapsodic theogony, though not in connection with the swallowing of Protogonos, Zeus in fact asks Night: ‘how can I make all things one but each separate?’
- 50 Cf. p. 489 above.
- 51 See West, *Orphic Poems*, 70; and on the broader issue the subtle discussion of J.Rudhardt, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 269–74.
- 52 Cf. Detienne, *L'écriture d'Orphée*, 116–32, and on the play West, *Orphic Poems*, 12–13, with references. Does Orpheus’ conversion serve to differentiate ‘Orphic/bacchic’ from simple ‘bacchic’?
- 53 Cf. n. 45 above; Rudhardt, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 274–83; and the works of Detienne cited elsewhere.
- 54 F 58, 153, 195, 303.
- 55 To the testimonia cited by Kern for joint rule add Damascius in Plat. *Phaed.* 1.3 p. 29 Westerink.
- 56 *Hymn* 7. 11–15, cited by Kern *ad* F 210 (p. 231). Nonnus similarly describes the death of Dionysus son of Persephone in book 6, the birth of Dionysus son of Semele in book 7. Dyarchy resumed: so K.Ziegler, in A.Pauly, G.Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft* xviii (Stuttgart, 1942), s.v. *Orphische Dichtung*, 1354; L.Brisson in Pepin, *Proclus*, 68 (without reference to *Hymn* 7) and in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 170.
- 57 F 220, 224 beginning.
- 58 So Linforth, *Arts of Orpheus*, 329–31, 359–60, with good arguments. To show that the idea of ‘Dionysus in man’ is not an *ad hoc* invention of Olympiodorus, Dodds (*Greeks and the Irrational*, 177 n. 135; cf. too Casadio, *Orpheus* 8 (1987), 392) cites the ‘Pythagorean rule’ ‘don’t tear apart the god in yourself, which, as Neoplatonists saw (to Dodds’ evidence add Proclus *In Cratyl.* 77.24 Pasquali), expresses the idea ‘don’t violate your better nature’ by reference to the myth of Dionysus. But this allegorical identification of Dionysus with a superior principle in man (in Proclus loc. cit. it is mind) is different from Olympiodorus’ claim that we are literally descended from him. The Pythagorean rule itself is based on the

- idea of 'the god in every man', which as a fixed phrase is likely to be Stoic (cf. M.Pohlenz, *Die Stoa* (Göttingen, 1948), index s.v. *Dämon im Menschen*).
- 59 So, rightly, West, *Orphic Poems*, 22, against e.g. Dodds, *Greeks and the Irrational*, 149.
- 60 Pindar fr. 133 Snell; Plato, *Laws* 701c (cf. 854b); Xenokrates fr. 20 Heinze: for details (and for the sceptics), see Dodds, *Greeks and the Irrational*, 155–6, with notes, whom I follow here closely; also A.Cameron, *AJA* 46 (1942), 457–8. Other views of these passages continue to be expressed, however: see West, *Orphic Poems*, 21 n. 53; Alderink, *Creation and Salvation in Ancient Orphism*, 65–74; R.Seaford, *HSPb* 90 (1986), 7–8; but cf. Casadio, *Orpheus* 1987, 393; *SMSR* 1986, 296.
- 61 Pelike in the Hermitage, St Petersburg, St 1792; cf. E.Simon, *AK* 9 (1966), 72–92; F.Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens* (Berlin, 1974), 66–78; C.Bérard, *Anodoi* (Rome, 1974), 147–51.
- 62 But West, *Orphic Poems*, 96, detects here a different, though still early, tradition.
- 63 To those contained in the standard edition by G.Zuntz, *Persephone* (Oxford, 1972), 277–393, are now to be added *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* xxvi 1139 (the Hipponium tablet), xxvii 226 *bis*, and (the new Thessalian specimen) K.Tsantsanoglou and G.M.Parassoglou, 'Ελληνικά (Δημοσιεύματα τῆς 'Εταιρείας τῶν Μακεδονικῶν Σπουδῶν), 38, 1987, 3–17: cf. W.Burkert, in *Orfismo in Magna Grecia* (Atti del quattordicesimo convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia, Naples 1975), 81–104; R.Janko, *CQ* 34 (1984), 89–100; Lloyd-Jones, op. cit in n. 1 above (note the appendix, on the Thessalian tablet).
- 64 Cf. Zuntz, *Persephone*, 370–6.
- 65 Cf. M.Schmidt in *Orfismo in Magna Grecia*, 105–38, summarized by West, *Orphic Poems*, 25.
- 66 For this tablet cf. n. 63 above.
- 67 For the tablet see n. 63 above, and F.Graf in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 87–102. The mystic formulas of lines 3–5 are non-metrical; the first verse too is a 'hexameter' of seven feet.
- 68 Critics have compared Pindar fr. 137 Snell: 'Blessed is he who has seen these things [the Eleusinian Mysteries] before passing beneath the earth. He knows the end of life, he knows its god-given beginning'; but is it certain that 'end' and 'beginning' are here identified?
- 69 Proclus, F 229. The Neoplatonists normally, to my knowledge, ignore the ritual dimension of Orphism; the exception here must be due to explicit indications in the text of the rhapsodic theology.
- 70 So Graf, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 95–7.
- 71 Cf. Seaford, *HSPb* (1986), 5–6, and the scholars he cites; also Lloyd-Jones (n. 1 above), 275=100. A devaluation of 'earth' may be characteristic of Orphic thought: the prominence of night in the cosmogony is achieved to some extent at the expense of Gaia (Sabbatucci, *Saggio sul misticismo greco*, 95–102).
- 72 Several recent writers have rightly resisted Dodds' claim, *Greeks and the Irrational*, 146, that 'we miss in him...any attempt to synthesise his religious and his scientific positions': see most recently C.Osborne, *CQ* 37 (1987), 24–50 (though her striking argument that his *Purifications* and *Physics* are one and the same work makes too light of the counter-indication of the addressees).
- 73 I cite by the standard numeration of H.Diels and W.Kranz, *Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (6th edn, Berlin, 1951); there is a valuable edition of Empedocles,

- with different numeration, by M.R.Wright (New Haven, 1981). For a translation see J.Barnes, *Early Greek Philosophy* (Harmondsworth, 1987), 161–201.
- 74 For the text of this fragment, which is very uncertain in several places, I follow Zuntz, *Persephone*, 245.
- 75 So, rightly, Casadio, *Orpheus* 1987, 392.
- 76 The question has been endlessly discussed: for a full recent treatment, using more evidence than is cited here, see G.Casadio, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 119–43; more briefly, Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, 126.
- 77 *Meno* 81a, *Laws* 870d–e. The case for an Orphic reference is stronger here than for the Platonic texts that appear as F 6 and 20.
- 78 A 1, verse 5: cf. Zuntz, *Persephone*, 320–2. The ‘life-death-life’ triad of one of the Olbia tablets points to life after death but not necessarily (however probably) to reincarnation.
- 79 Hecataios of Abdera (late fourth century) in Diodorus Siculus 1.92.3, 96.5.
- 80 Cf. the brilliant survey of varieties of metempsychosis in Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, 133–5; also Schibli, *Pherekydes of Syros*, 121 n. 38.
- 81 For a determined recent effort see F.Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens* (Berlin, 1974), 79–150. A fragment of an ‘Orphic *katabasis*’ (account of a descent to the underworld) survives, but probably of Roman date: see H.Lloyd-Jones and P.J.Parsons, in *Kyklos* (Festschrift R.Keydell, Berlin, 1978), 88–100=H.Lloyd-Jones, *Greek Comedy, Hellenistic Literature, Greek Religion and Miscellanea* (Oxford, 1990), 333–40. On early *katabaseis* in general see H.Lloyd-Jones, *Maia* 19 (1967), 206–29=*Greek Epic, Lyric and Tragedy*, 167–87. There was eschatology in the rhapsodic theogony, F 222–31.
- 82 Cf. J.Bremmer, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 23–4.
- 83 Pp. 485 and 497 above. In *Gorgias* 493a, Plato revealingly speaks of a myth about the afterlife as being doubtless the work of ‘some clever Italian or Sicilian’.
- 84 See T 182–95; Herodotus 7.6.
- 85 Cf. Schibli, *Pherekydes of Syros*, 104–27.
- 86 See especially Burkert, *Lore and Science in Ancient Pythagoreanism*, 125–32.
- 87 West argues for a date c. 500 for the Derveni poem; but the chronological pointers are very slight.
- 88 West, *Orphic Poems*, ch. 1.
- 89 Cf. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, ch. 5.
- 90 For criticism of this approach (a development by Dodds of ideas of K.Meuli) see Graf, op. cit. in n.7 above; Casadio, *SMSR* 1986, 312–15; and the important critique of the whole concept of ‘Greek shamans’ by J.Bremmer, *The Early Greek Concept of the Soul* (Princeton, 1983), 25–48.
- 91 Cf. G.Casadio in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 140.
- 92 Cf. notes 44 and 64 above.
- 93 On all this see M.Detienne’s important study, ‘Dionysos orphique et le bouilli rôti’, in his *Dionysos mis à mort* (Paris, 1977; Engl. tr. as *Dionysos Slain*, 1979), 163–217; also his ‘Les chemins de la déviance: Orphisme, Dionysisme et Pythagorisme’, in *Orfismo in Magna Grecia*, 49–79. The ‘Problem’ is one of the set first edited by U.Cats Bussemaker, 3.43 (Didot Aristotle iv.331, Paris, 1857). The asymmetry between the Titans’ act (‘roasting the boiled’) and the sacrificial norm (roasting some portions, then boiling others) does however make it harder to see the one as an inversion of the other. More commonly, the myth has been seen as reflecting, not inverting, a ritual of some kind: so still West, *Orphic Poems*, ch. 5.

- 94 Sophocles fr. 837 Radt, Aristophanes, *Frogs*, 454–9; cf. *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, 480–2.
- 95 So J.Redfield, in *Orphisme et Orphée*, 105.
- 96 [Eur.] *Rhesus*, 943f., [Dem.] 25.11. The fundamental study of this subject is F.Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens* (Berlin, 1974); for some reservations see G.Zuntz, *Gnomon* 50 (1978), 526–31.
- 97 So Graf, *Eleusis und die orphische Dichtung Athens*, 182–6; the existence of such a poem at this date is, however, not quite guaranteed (cf. West, *Orphic Poems*, 23–4). Musaios and Eumolpos: see Plato, *Republic* 363c, with West, *Orphic Poems*, 23, 41.
- 98 *Republic* 363e–365a, 366a (F 3); on what follows cf. R.Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983), 303–6.
- 99 E.g. *Meno* 81a–b.

ORDER, INTERACTION,
AUTHORITY
Ways of looking at Greek religion



Emily Kearns

So then I think some clever, ingenious man decided to invent gods for mortals, so that they might be a terror to the wicked, whenever they do or say or think anything in secret...he surrounded men with such fears, and with his account he established the divine in a conspicuous place, and put an end to lawlessness through fear.

No sensible person will try to change whatever Delphi or Dodona or Ammon or some ancient tradition has authorized in any manner—by epiphanies or by a claim of divine inspiration—on the strength of which people have established sacrifices and rituals...

No man knows, nor ever will know, the truth about the gods and all the things which I mention. Even if he happens to speak of it exactly as it is, he is not aware of it...¹

Is it possible to find any unifying strands which will make sense of the vast diversity in the statements of the Greeks about their religion? What did Greeks see when they looked at the complex of practice and belief which surrounded their gods? The difficulties in such questions are manifold. Attempts to reach a large synthesis have inevitably a high degree of subjectivity; methodologies may be called into question, the range of material selected may seem to others untypical, while many less tangible, personal factors will influence the discussion in ways less easy to determine. Further, in tackling an approach which depends on investigating apparent attitudes as well as behaviour, we run the risk of privileging the articulate and so getting a distorted picture of society as a whole. Explicit statements about the gods and about religion are likely to be all in some way exceptional. They may be the product of people who have stopped to think hard about the subject, and so may not represent the more typical beliefs of others—or indeed of their own authors in more careless moments; or else they may be slanted by the need for a particular effect, say in the context of comedy or oratory. No less than ourselves, looking from the outside, the Greeks could have had different ways of looking at their religion from the inside. There is a danger, too, of trying to impose a greater unity than is justified on a body of evidence stretching over many centuries, geographical locations, and types of

society. Yet Greekness, and Greek religion, were recognized as such by the ancients themselves, albeit with somewhat blurred edges; and the whole question of a people's conscious and unconscious expectations of their religion, the place which they assign it in their society, is such an important one that there is almost a duty to try to answer it, even if every answer must be flawed and incomplete. The present essay, then, can be regarded as a provisional attempt to trace some strands in Greek patterns of religious thought and (which is not quite the same thing) thought about religion.

An obvious starting-point lies in examining the semantic range and significance of Greek words connected with the divine.² 'Religion' has notoriously no Greek equivalent; the closest one can get will be a paraphrase involving words such as *theos* (god) and its adjectival form *theios*, or *hieros*, conventionally translated 'holy' or 'sacred'. What then are the connotations of *theos*? Even when confined to the classical period, this is an immense question, but a brief conspectus may help. The word may signify indifferently a particular god, some god unknown or unspecified, or a more impersonal concept of deity: in all of these cases, however, the word carries overtones of power, deathlessness and unpredictability. The divine is inexplicable and extreme, whether the extremity manifests itself as 'the other'³ or as 'like humans but more so'—both versions are embedded in Greek, as perhaps in most, religious thought. The paired opposite of *theos* is *anthropos* and its adjectives, by contrast characterized as mortal and prone to error and failure.⁴ Although, as I shall discuss below, there is often an expectation that *theos* may relate closely to morality, this is not I think a nuance conveyed in the word itself. While it is possible to say, for instance, that 'it is God among mortals to prosper' or 'to recognize one's friends',⁵ there are seemingly no classical examples of a similar equation of God with upright behaviour. It is extremes of good or bad fortune which prompt the identification, not conformity with a set of moral values. If the word *theos* then does not in itself carry connotations of goodness, then it seems that the *theos/anthropos* contrast does not work primarily along a moral axis; in other respects, however, the contrast is often a real and vivid one. While the divine intersects with the human at every turn, those meetings are unpredictable and often unwelcome: τὸ θεῖον πᾶν ἐὼν φθονερόν τε καὶ ταραχώδες is the well-known aphorism of Herodotus, 'the divine [is] full of jealousy and disturbance'.⁶ They are interventions from afar, from a state strongly contrasted with the human condition, which serve often only to deepen the disjunction between human and divine.

But this picture relates to only part of the relevant semantic area. While *ta theia* carries suggestions of remoteness and distance, *ta hiera* by contrast most frequently evokes a context of divine-human interaction, of communication between the two poles, generally within a set framework. Gods themselves are not *hieroi* (hence 'sacred' is a closer approximation in English than the commoner and more emotive 'holy'); things connected with them are, especially such things as sanctuaries, sacrifices, priests, dedicated objects and ritual conventions, which link the world of gods with that of men. From the purely human, classificatory point of view, what is *hieron* is different, put aside away from normal use; considered processually, the *hieron* indicates a continuing dynamic of interchange. Where *theion* contrasts with *anthropinon*, *hieron*, viewed in this manner, mediates the two. The relationship thus evoked is not, of course, an equal one; it is because the gods are seen to be somehow more than men that what is *hieron* is, often, special and not merely

pragmatically set aside for a particular use. But it does both suggest and reflect the possibility of some kind of transactional connection. While the range of application of 'holy' and its close equivalents suggests the possibility, desirability even, of transformation into a state which can also be predicated of God, *hieros* indicates the primacy of a different thought-pattern in which the two-way relationship is more open and straightforward. The *hieron* is the channel through which humans pay honours⁷ to gods and gods give benefits to humans, in the form as it may be of oracles, of granting a prayer, or simply of their benevolent presence. It is the particular mode in which a meaningful and ordered relationship between the often distant terms of divine and human becomes possible. Such communication is an essential part of religion as it is normally understood.

If this analysis is correct, it will be seen that a sacred/secular polarity cannot play the same central role in the apprehension of the world as it has often done elsewhere, most notably in Christian thought. A divide between gods and humans; between things which are *hieron* and things which are not—these make sense in Greek society, but a division of the totality of perceived existence into 'sacred' and 'secular' realms does not. The *hieron* is not an independent, self-existent category but one which comes into being specifically to link two very different orders of existence. The perception, therefore, that Greek religious practice is played out on a this-worldly field, and relates to the satisfaction of 'secular' needs, would surely seem either incomprehensible or a truism to an ancient Greek. There is much room for interaction in this picture, but little for interchange: mortal is not transformed into something more like God by contact with the *hieron*, nor indeed do we find here much sense of a primary necessity for a moral or other lasting change in the worshipper. We cannot however rule out an emphasis on transformation in some areas of religious thought and experience beyond the everyday: we are seriously hampered by our lack of information on the explicitly initiatory rites known as mysteries.⁸ A generalized study of some basic words should obviously not be regarded as supplying the key to all aspects of Greek religion.

The importance of the connection with morality is in fact seen when we explore some other nuances of the language of religion. A recent, important article by W.R.Connor draws attention to the contrasted pairing in Greek of *hiera* and *bosia*.⁹ Connor argues, surely rightly, that thus paired the words indicate not 'sacred' and 'secular', but refer to a related dichotomy: things which should be done in connection with the gods—rituals, sacrifice, observance of purity, for instance—and things which should be observed in the dealing of humans with one another—justice, fair play, and so on. He sees the shift from archaic to classical, particularly in Athens, not as a process of 'secularization', but in terms of a shift and redefining of boundaries between these two. In some contexts, of course, justice had always been seen as a matter of concern to the gods, as the worlds of Hesiod and the *Odyssey* make clear. But this view co-existed with the bleaker, more amoral picture prevailing in the *Iliad*, where the gods punish primarily offences against themselves, conceived as persons, and not against some abstract morality. In the late fifth and fourth centuries, we have the impression that as the discrepancy between the two views becomes more noticeable, so preference is given to the 'moral' gods; there is a sense that *bosia* as well as *hiera* might ultimately be the gods' concern. It does seem to be

the case that there is an acceleration in this period not only of statements linking the gods with morality, but also of the close association of ritual propriety in worshippers with moral uprightness, even sometimes a preference for the latter over the former.¹⁰ It is easy to exaggerate the degree of the shift—the older forms were far from being displaced—but we can still ask how to evaluate this tendency in terms of the role and centrality of the religious. From a purely *a priori* viewpoint, such a shift, far from being evidence of secularization, might as well be interpreted as a broadening of the sphere of religion, as a weakening. Connor himself does not go quite so far, and whether or not we in fact adopt this interpretation must depend in part on our own estimate of ‘religion’. In becoming more firmly aligned with justice and morality, is religion becoming a stronger, more integrating force, or is an original concept of the sacred giving way gradually to a more purely anthropocentric view of the universe? I pose the question not to answer it—that must be a task for the individual—but to illustrate the great degree of subjectivity involved in reaching any further conclusion.

A related question: ‘Is what is *bosion*, *bosion* because it is pleasing to the gods, or is what is pleasing to the gods pleasing to them because it is *bosion*?’ Socrates, who poses the question in Plato’s *Euthyphro*,¹¹ leads the surrounding discussion through the familiar ground of the moral difficulties of mythology and the less familiar territory of semantic difficulties in order (apparently) to reject the equation altogether, but that does not affect the popular view and the problem it poses: which has the primacy, morality or the gods? If morality, then the gods would seem to be demoted; if the gods, morality becomes disturbingly relative. Either way, the looseness of a connection which, it was felt, was somehow an important one was disquieting, in terms both of traditional, ‘immoral’ stories about the gods, and of the problem of undeserved human suffering (or prosperity). Much of the work of Euripides can in fact be read as an extended set of variations on these difficult and puzzling themes. Perhaps the only logical solution advanced to the problem was that of Heraclitus: ‘To the God everything is beautiful and good and just, but mortals assume that some things are unjust, others are just.’¹² This disjunction of the divine from what we understand as morality could be taken as a ‘religious’ point of view, in that God is clearly placed above human constraints: we can compare another fragment, ‘the human condition has no judgement (γνώμη), but the divine does.’¹³ In this respect (though without the context it is difficult to be sure) it seems radically different from the common complaint of characters in Euripides when faced with gaps between human ideals and divine practice, that ‘Gods ought to be better than mortals.’¹⁴ The occasional uncoupling of the connection between gods and morality, then, is as ambiguous between ‘religious’ and ‘secular/anti-religious’ as is the original connection and what Connor sees as its strengthening.

But though the exact nature of the relationship between morality and the gods might be uncertain or problematic, normal patterns of speech and thought—before as well as after the fifth century—certainly reflect a close link between the two. One who commits an injustice or a disgraceful act is said to have no thought for the gods, in a figure of thought revealing deeply embedded beliefs. Conversely, and more emphatically, the punishment of the wicked is seen—against an unspoken doubt—as confirmation and vindication of the gods: ‘you gods are still there on broad

Olympos, since those men have paid the penalty for their heedless violence' exclaims Odysseus' father Laertes on hearing of the death of the suitors.¹⁵ The fact, of course, that the observer proceeds from such an occurrence to infer the existence of gods does not imply a view that the gods themselves are secondary to justice and morality; rather the opposite in this case, since it is clear that we have here an argument from effect to cause. But the whole context of the *Odyssey* makes it clear that this is not a genuine, first-time deduction (how could it be?), merely further evidence of a viewpoint which most of the human characters accept, even if they are sometimes puzzled by phenomena which appear to contradict it. The problem which Plato raises in *Euthyphro* has obvious philosophical interest, but it is of no more help in understanding popular, associative thought than the question 'Is Fate above Zeus, or vice versa?' is useful in appreciating the *Iliad*. The picture of the relationship conveyed by less consciously reflective works, from Homer onwards, is both vaguer and more complex, suggesting perhaps that the Socratic method may not be the most useful tool in dealing with this material.

In a now famous essay, Clifford Geertz framed an influential definition of religion in which its function as 'formulating conceptions of a general order of existence' is of central importance.¹⁶ His emphasis elsewhere in the definition on the importance of symbols and of 'moods and motivations' makes it clear that he is not thus reducing the role of religion to that of a provider of explanations, but this point in particular seems to work very well for the Greek religious system. The fact that the Greeks developed no theology in the normal sense should not obscure a very real degree of coherence in the system itself, a major component in which is precisely the connection between morality and the divine. Simply because the connection is found in a majority of religious systems, we should not on that account underestimate its significance for Greek religion; and because it led to consciously perceived logical and experiential problems, we should not underrate its strength and coherence, for no religion or religious doctrine has solved this conundrum to universal satisfaction. The prevailing sense, then, is perhaps that of a dominant *order* in which, as far as human beings are concerned, gods and moral abstractions march closely together, both laying down and enforcing the laws by which the world abides. We find, then, a sense not only of an order of existence, 'the way things are', but a more conscious and definite idea of an ordering principle. Herodotus, apparently reporting sacral tradition from the oracular shrine at Dodona, derives the word *theos* from the ordering role of the gods.¹⁷ More specifically, Zeus, the personal god of mythology, is also the supreme arbiter of human existence; at his side is Dike or Themis, both goddess and personification of right and order.¹⁸ Nemesis may be regarded as a goddess, mother of Helen, worshipped at Rhamnous in Attica;¹⁹ or as the principle which notes down for vengeance those who overstep the mark. Though we must wait for sophistic influence to ponder whether Zeus is 'a natural force, or the mind of mortals',²⁰ the origins of this type of speculation lie in well-established patterns linking and all but identifying deity with moral forces as that which gives order to the world. It is this deep-seated belief system which in the fifth century gives rise to the concept of 'unwritten laws', originating in an area beyond human legislation—with the gods, or Zeus, or Justice personified, or somewhere unknowable.²¹ In the best-known versions

of the idea, those of Sophocles, we seem to distinguish two functions of these laws, or two different kinds of laws: not only are they viewed as prescriptive, analogously to human, written laws, but they are also in a sense descriptive, like a scientific law. Whereas the breaker of a human law might hope to evade punishment, one who transgresses an unwritten law will pay for it in the end: that is guaranteed by the order which the laws represent. Kreon's attempt in *Antigone* to ignore the unwritten laws brings at first sinister signs in the form of unsuccessful sacrifices and polluted altars, and ultimately disaster for himself and his family. The chorus of Theban elders in *Oedipus Tyrannus*, having evoked laws 'born in the *aither*, with Olympos as sole father', see their unpunished transgression as equivalent to the collapse of the whole moral-religious complex which animates society: 'if such deeds are honoured among mortals, what need have I to dance?'²²

But of course the play's world-threatening chaos is averted; the gods and their order are vindicated, and even in Thebes the proper state of affairs is restored—we are to assume—by the discovery and punishment of Oedipus. For although neither he nor the chorus yet knows it, it is Oedipus himself who has transgressed the unwritten laws in their prescriptive form. However, such deeds are not honoured, and the overall system, the descriptive laws, is precisely what is on display in the course of the drama. The impurity of Oedipus gives rise to the plague with which the play begins, just as Kreon's actions in *Antigone* cause the sacrificial chaos which disrupts normal communications with the gods. Oedipus' error is not in the normal sense a 'moral' one, in that he acted unknowingly; and similarly it is often argued on the basis of Teiresias' words at *Antigone* 1068–71 that Kreon's actions are punished not so much as morally wrong as because they infringe proper categories: he buries the living and denies burial to the dead. For Sophocles, then, the structure which the unwritten laws both form and guarantee covers *mores* as well as morality in our sense, and both areas are intimately linked with the divine. There is therefore a larger structure which includes morality, to be sure, but includes also elements which may even seem to contradict a simple moral system of 'fair' rewards and punishments. Ultimately this structure subsumes, if it does not solve, the problem of the gods' injustice.

Unwritten laws may not be attested before the fifth century, and Sophocles may give a particularly sophisticated form to the concept of universal order, but it is clear, I think, well before this that the ideas of justice, order and the divine go very closely together. Hesiod gives classic expression to the contrasting fates of cities where justice is, and is not, respected: the just city enjoys peace, plenty and population increase, while those whose business is 'violence and wicked deeds' suffer plague, famine and defeat on land and sea.²³ All this occurs by the will and agency of Zeus, who plays a similar role in parallel passages in the Homeric poems.²⁴ It is Zeus, after all, who gives justice (*δίκη*) to men, in contrast to the internecine strife which prevails in the animal kingdom, and it is the same justice which he himself uses in meting out rewards and punishments in accordance with human compliance with the standard. In other words, divine justice judges human justice. This arrangement (called a law, *νόμος*, at 276) is the clear forerunner of the idea of unwritten laws, and like the Sophoclean concept it links prescriptive demands with a larger system which guarantees an eventual ordered response to human compliance with, or disregard of, those demands.

In this light we get a new perspective on the old problem of the apparent injustice of the gods. Often enough the divine, so far from being linked with order, is seen as arbitrary and unpredictable, so much so that an extraordinary occurrence may be viewed as the irruption of the divine into the everyday. Yet this tendency, common to many religious systems, to regard the divine both as source of order (or as order itself) and as transcending or disrupting order, is of course capable of resolution if we concede that we are talking about something different from normal human ideas of order. We see this in one form with Herodotus, whose characterization of the divine as *ταραχῶδες* (above, p. 512) is borne out by his narrative; his text is full of episodes showing the destructive, unpredictable disruption which the divine brings to human lives, but such events none the less follow an overall pattern whereby undue prosperity and especially the arrogance which results from this leads eventually to downfall. The gods' treatment of Oedipus may seem unmotivated and arbitrary, and, unlike Herodotus, Sophocles gives us no hint of the principles on which they work, but as we have seen the play demonstrates very clearly, and against the chorus's fearful supposition, that a mysterious, inscrutable order does indeed work in human affairs, though not necessarily to human advantage. Still clearer is the case of the plague with which the play opens, a catastrophe which appears as a lapse from order into chaos; but as in Hesiod plague and famine come in response to injustice, so here plague is the necessary outcome of the presence of a pollutant, of something terribly wrong within the city. Sophocles' version is less 'fair', of course, because neither Oedipus nor anyone else has sinned wittingly, but in both cases apparent disorder is in fact a retributive effect of the system's operation: true disorder, as the chorus see, would occur only if actions displeasing to the gods, whether willed or not, went unnoticed and unpunished.

This rather qualified theodicy is not of course an article of faith, accepted by all of the people all of the time, but it has a certain importance none the less. With the Theban plague, Sophocles is drawing on a common myth-type which attests the well-established nature of the pattern: order in the city is restored at a time of crisis by implementing the obscure or outrageous-sounding advice of an oracle. Typically the story appears as cult *aition*; in its most extreme version, the citizens punish, usually with death, an action which by ordinary standards is clearly reprehensible: causing the deaths of children, showing disrespect to a cult image. When disaster ensues it is traced by the oracle to this punishment, and the citizens are told to make amends by instituting a cult for the dead 'criminal'.²⁵ This story goes further than the comparable Oedipus version (and much further than Hesiod) in its exploration of paradox, order and disorder. Disorder erupts into the citizens' lives with the initial scandalous action, and they take what steps a human concept of justice would consider appropriate in order to correct the anomaly. But the attempt to restore order results in worse chaos, which is itself the superhuman and—from a cosmic point of view—predictable response to an action which in fact transgressed the proper order, although, like Oedipus, the citizens could not really be expected to know that they were doing wrong. The story-type's successful outcome indicates that the divine is not conceived of here as 'merely' capricious: plague is the result of a specific action and it ends, too, in accordance with specific instructions aimed at correcting that action. The cult which so frequently ensues stands as the guarantee

of the restoration of order and especially of the correct relation between human and divine.

We see then two rather different concepts of divine order at work. In the world of Hesiod and the *Odyssey*, human and divine justice mirror each other, and the cosmic order is one which if they cannot grasp in its entirety humans can at least feel some affinity with. Beside this, there is another picture which, while it acknowledges some form of connection between normal human ideas of order and justice and the order of the world as it actually is, also sees a disjunction between them. For Hesiod, the relation between the gods, or Zeus, and moral principle is fairly straightforward: Zeus gives justice to the human race, Justice personified complains to Zeus when she is ill-treated. The points are in greater or less degree metaphorical, but the metaphor suggests and perhaps imposes a primacy of the divine over morality. The view represented by Sophocles is, as I have suggested, much less clear on this relationship and tends to blur the distinction between the two. Both versions, however, clearly suggest a system in which the world as we perceive it is ultimately governed by something only partially accessible to normal perception: the universe is in some sense or other a religious universe.

Of course, concepts of order, of 'an order of existence', do not necessarily entail acceptance of a religious system of any description, a point to which I shall return. But the converse does appear to be true: Greek religion 'formulates conceptions of a general order of existence' inasmuch as the gods themselves, particularly Zeus, are seen as disposing order in the universe and are even the objects of a quasi-identification with that order. The order which is theirs has much to do with morality, something also to do with categories of beings (gods, humans, animals; mortals and immortals) for whom different paths are marked out,²⁶ and something to do with the rules governing divine-human communication. In its broadest sense, this divine order covers all the dealings of the gods with our more familiar world; everything that happens is in accord with a pattern. From a slightly different point of view, however, we can see the interaction of the two as operating in three main ways: in the establishment and maintenance of an overarching system of order; in unexpected and paradoxical interventions, which often upset limited human notions of order; and in the sort of standard divine-human exchanges which, depending on view, can be labelled 'religious practice' or *ta hiera*. That belief in the gods' care for humans and their world is not merely a tenet in Plato's *Laos* but is fundamental to the Greek religious system has been well demonstrated by Harvey Yunis;²⁷ throughout Greek literature we find ample documentation of this interest and concern shown in the three ways I have mentioned, whereas the opposite view, that the gods are not concerned with the world of men, needs always to be asserted very emphatically, as counter to normal assumptions.²⁸

The importance of the gods' interaction is not of course a feature peculiar to Greek thought, but it needs to be stressed before we can assess the expectations which the Greeks had of their own religious system. The necessity to that system of some form of interchange or communication between gods and mortals is shown *e contrario* by another possible view, that whatever order exists in the universe has nothing to do with divinity, but is the product of 'natural', non-divine laws and/or of human consensus. The rise of scientific materialism on the one hand parallels a

more widely diffused shift in views on the origins of morality: de Romilly points out the acceleration in the fourth century and onwards of the application of a consensus theory to the concept of unwritten laws.²⁹ There is a danger here of exaggerating both the diachronic element in the analysis and the clarity of the distinction: appeals to the gods as guardians and guarantors of morality and order retained an emotive force to the end of antiquity, and for the most part the more 'secular' view of the origins of morality represents not so much a firmly held dogma as a gradual shift in emphasis; it would surely not be impossible for the same individual to conceptualize, for instance, unwritten laws at one time as having a divine origin, at another in a more 'naturalistic' way. As for the other forms of interaction, the propensity to attribute extraordinary events to divine sources remains common enough,³⁰ while the overall frequency of religious acts, though forms obviously underwent change and evolution, shows little sign of decline throughout antiquity. One could argue that in these cases the gods are being pigeon-holed into a special 'religious' category, while having to face competition with other types of explanation in the area of more general cosmic order. Obviously, however, this is not enough to render them irrelevant; the major exception to such commonplace mixtures of thought-systems would be the paid-up Epicurean, for whom it was certain that the gods could have no part in the creation or sustaining of either the natural or the moral universe. Where there is such certainty, all three types of interaction must be invalidated. Not only do sacrifices and other transactional or 'communicatory' elements of religion become pointless, but the gods themselves become useless both as explanation of the unexpected and as an ordering principle or ultimate *point de repaire*. The sundering of their connection with our world deprives them of religious force; without it they are marginalized, reduced to acting as an effectively fictive paradigm of tranquillity and philosophic calm, while the central and charismatic³¹ roles in the system, as shown so eloquently in Lucretius' poem, are taken by the scientific laws which form true order, and by their discoverer Epicurus. The central, ordering principle is that which really matters.

For most Greeks, then, acceptance of some version of the religious system involved a belief in interaction with the gods, including an acceptance of some sort of ordering role for them. The gods were seen to act in the visible world, and to that extent religion was inevitably concerned with basic, 'secular' needs. But to what extent, and in what ways, did acceptance of such patterns of thought impinge on less obviously 'religious' areas of life? In the essay mentioned above, Geertz discusses the way in which religion instils a special perspective in looking at the world; it is the movement between this viewpoint and the everyday perspective which for Geertz is the starting-point for any investigation into the social role of religion. If, as Geertz assumes, the religious perspective is accepted in some way as the 'really real', the kind and degree of its connection with—or disjunction from—the perspective of everyday life must still give us some insight into a society's structures and priorities. Interaction and communication with the gods, in our case, have obviously certain correlatives on the practical plane. The experience of a form of contact with the divine, the assurance that a reciprocal (if unevenly so) relationship exists, which is such an important part of the religious system, is balanced by more obvious and practical results, desire for which will often have been the immediate reason for

approaching the god. Regular sacrifices ensured a city's well-being, as well as providing an opportunity to exercise the more intangible quality of 'piety' (εὐσέβεια). Viewed in another way, prayer and sacrifice can be seen as the natural consequences, the corollaries in action, of an ordered system in which the gods call the tune but still have a care for mortals. This system is evoked every time a sacred action is performed, though it tends to be made explicit only in denial: 'in vain we sacrifice' says Hekabe in the *Trojan Women* (1242), seeing the ruin of her city. It is precisely the fact that the rationale of regular cult is relatively seldom stated that gives such statements their power to shock. The belief that recourse to the divine is reasonably likely to bear fruit is part of normal experience; divine assistance is not so much privileged or given special status that it precludes taking practical measures in pursuit of the same result. The practical may even intrude on the superhuman, as in the famous case of Themistokles' interpretation of the oracle's 'wooden wall' to mean ships, thus favouring his own policy.³²

Another area in which the 'pure' religious perspective has important practical consequences is in the structure of society. Often we see religious forms as the glue which bound members of the different groups in Greek society to each other, an instrument in achieving a primary objective; equally we might say that the experience of religion as a communal practice, in the minds of its participants, was the origin of feelings and traditions of group coherence. Shared sacrifices were what usually came to mind when the unity of the group was pondered. Similarity of festivals and religious observances played a part in defining even such large groups as Dorians and Ionians.³³ Not in every case was cult the sole defining criterion, but it was more than the icing on the cake: ritual, 'who performs what', being one of the most easily defined statements about a group, comes to be experienced as primary. Neither (in the case of smaller groups) should we underestimate the emotional power of the actual experience of shared cult, particularly in the context of animal sacrifice.³⁴ But a further marker of group identity was provided by mythology—by traditions of shared ancestry or origin. In a weaker sense this too was a religious criterion, because such traditions looked back to a time when men were closer to gods, and genealogies traced descent back ultimately to a deity. Mythological traditions of this sort were often closely related to ritual as well, since something in the group's origins might act as *aition* for its most conspicuous cult. As with ritual, narrative tradition could be perceived not only as defining and validating the group, but also as the quasi-religious datum which had as consequence the desirability of certain forms of behaviour, most obviously the promotion of group solidarity.

Of course, the 'proper' consequences of the religious perspective in everyday life might be interfered with and distorted by other considerations. Catastrophic occurrences are likely to diminish human faith in the divine and eventually to diminish the regard paid to religious practice. So Thucydides relates that during the plague in Athens people ceased to look for help from oracles and such things, and disregarded fundamental rules of purity by allowing deaths on sacred ground.³⁵ Both these cases (though in the first we may suspect a degree of Thucydidean exaggeration) demonstrate how in extreme circumstances the practical demands of the system may be transgressed; the relationship between religious and everyday perspective breaks down, though seldom to the extent that the transgression is not recognized. Pressures

of other kinds cause similar effects. For reasons of personal safety or advantage oracles are manipulated, priests are bribed, false oaths are sworn invoking the gods. The religiously based ties which hold groups together are sundered through the demands of war or stasis. The mention of such events, along with other major moral lapses less clearly oriented to piety, carries a strong emotional charge. Their description therefore offers great possibilities to writers, and for that reason descriptions such as that of Thucydides on the breakdown of all civic norms in the political crisis at Kerkyra are not very helpful in trying to determine how widespread such disregard of religion actually was—though his statement that extreme forms of the breakdown of order are more characteristic of war than of peace is plausible enough.³⁶ More revealing, perhaps, are the demands of litigation for oath and counter-oath, which would seem to imply widespread perjury: plaintiff and defendant could not, presumably, both be telling the truth. Even making allowance for cases where divergent interpretations of events resulted in each party's genuine belief in their own veracity, and for more questionable formulations which were designed to mislead while sticking to the letter of the truth, lying under oath cannot have been altogether exceptional, despite the curses which the swearer called down upon himself and his family if he forswore his oath. For this reason, Plato regarded the use of oaths in the lawcourts as inappropriate in the modern age. But we cannot of course know how easy or how uncomfortable the perjurer felt with his act.³⁷

If we cannot begin to quantify the frequency or degree of transgression of religious norms, we can at least approach the question from a different angle and ask what methods the religious system used in order to assert and maintain itself: in Geertzian terms, how it succeeded in conveying 'an aura of factuality' to religious 'moods and motivations', its strategies of authority. If the Greek religious system lacked the obvious structures of professional priesthood and holy books, it could hardly do without more subtle and deep-seated means of conviction—though again, the type of assent elicited was obviously rather different from that desired by more dogmatic creeds. Clearly, an impression of factuality is unlikely to be transmitted on a large scale by reasoned argument; rather, the structures of religion itself convince by virtue of their deep embeddedness in society, their seeming inevitability. To begin with, there is the language of the sacred. Words like *hieros*, *hosios*, *theos*, *anthropos* not only reflect the way the Greeks thought about their relations with the gods, and hence give us useful insights; the process is a two-way one, since in their turn such words and their connotations direct modes of thought. We know how influential was the belief that words have a natural, not merely a conventional, relationship to things;³⁸ still deeper, no doubt, lay the tacit assumption that language reflects an objective reality, the world as it is, not merely a particular way of perceiving the world. The word *theos*, then, insinuates a belief in an entity *theos* operating in the sort of contexts where the word is used. The concepts behind words like *hieros*, *hosios*, *themis* (in the sense of religiously permissible) and so on are further backed up by experience in a society which accepts and uses such classifications in its ritual activity.

Mythology, the tales of the poets, was another area where a form of authority could carry conviction, although with major qualifications. The existence of incompatible variants, of stories which seem almost designed to provoke negative

reactions, of doubt and rejection of the narrative tradition, is built into the whole Greek mythological system, and no individual myth is beyond challenge. But some mythological data go deeper. In Herodotus' belief, Homer and Hesiod established the epithets and genealogies of the gods,³⁹ giving each a distinctive form and sphere of influence, and Herodotus himself shows his acceptance of their system by using the Greek gods as a standard for identifying individual deities of other peoples; what at one moment he sees as convention, at another he accepts apparently without reflection. The hold that the traditional pantheon still possessed in later antiquity is demonstrated by the many attempts to accommodate its figures in new theological and philosophical systems. Poetry may well be doubted; the Muses tell many false things, but they also know how to relate the truth,⁴⁰ and their individuation of the gods was such a fundamental point that the inclination to take it as truth was very great indeed.

But religion's greatest 'authority strategy' is ritual; the simple fact is that religious acts themselves generate acceptance of the broad structure in which they are located, at least in a society where religion is not a minority activity. Although we know so little about what Greek ritual actually felt like (despite the accumulation of a vast number of facts about it) we have no reason to suppose that it was particularly unusual in this respect. To a much lesser extent than with mythology, ritual forms (such as the distribution of sacrificial meat in favour of the human participants) might be questioned, even thought inappropriate, but the overall system remained firmly in place; indeed, the evolution of forms and prolific burgeoning of new cults was a sign of its vigour. While many modern students of religion see ritual as primary in the development of religious forms, rather than being devised to express particular beliefs or as an appropriate response to a pre-existing picture of the world, this is seldom the outlook of those who participate in ritual; more frequently, the performance of religious acts creates a presumption that they are directed somewhere, that through them the visible community is linked with something beyond it. Thus worship establishes authority not only for its own forms, but for a larger structure of which it is part. Further, the deity accepts the sacrifice, answers prayers (sometimes!), and most spectacularly perhaps gives oracles; ritual, as I have said, is conceived as a two-way process in which deity responds to human communication.

Is there more to the authority of ritual than this? Many religions claim a divine origin for at least their central rituals: it was the god himself, either directly or through an intermediary, who instructed the community in the methods of his worship. We find in Plato the idea that festivals in general are of divine origin, a gift of rest and refreshment to human beings;⁴¹ presumably Plato intends this as a corrective to the usual view that the gods take delight in sacrifices and festivals in their honour. More specifically, some cults claimed that their own particular forms came from the gods; the mysteries of Eleusis, to take an obvious example, were taught by Demeter herself.⁴² Similar foundation myths exist for many cults, where the deity instructs a favoured mortal, who then becomes the cult's first priest and eponym of the priesthood, thus legitimating not only cult forms but priesthood and priestly family. It is this latter point which may cause difficulties with the whole process; where, as happened not infrequently, different families existed with rival claims on a cult complex, differing genealogies and cult *aitia* were likely to spring up, revealing all too clearly the

human origins of the myths. Presumably, the more prestigious the cult, the less liable it was to damage from this effect, and yet as a general phenomenon such disputes cannot have helped claims to divine authority. In fact, it was often more convenient to validate religious practices by a simple appeal to ancestral custom; the phrase *κατὰ τὰ πάτρια* avoids the question of origins altogether, leaving open the possibility of divine instruction (especially since in early times mortals were axiomatically closer to the gods), but being equally capable of an explanation in purely human terms. It is possible that here, as with the unwritten laws, whether you assumed a human or a divine origin for a cult might depend on the mood and context of the time. Contemporary experience suggested both were true, in a sense: new cults needed normally some form of divine authorization, mediated through oracle or dream, but if public they required also to be established by a political decision. Despite his view on the institution of festivals in general, Plato takes it for granted that the legislator himself will determine what festivals should be celebrated and sacrifices performed, in accordance with a precise and non-traditional calendar.⁴³ Pseudo-Xenophon (the 'Old Oligarch') is quite clear that the Athenians themselves have established public and publicly funded sacrifices with a political end in mind, that the *demos* should not be debarred by lack of means from enjoying the benefits of sacrifice and festival;⁴⁴ the polemical tone of the passage comes not from any cynicism about the human origins of such arrangements, which is taken for granted, but simply from the author's anti-democratic stance.

More cynically casual is the attitude of Aristotle in the *Politics*, where religious practices are presented in completely secular terms: their benefits derive from natural and readily understandable effects to which the gods are irrelevant. His legislator will decree, for instance, that pregnant women should walk daily to a temple for worship of the deities concerned with birth, so that they will benefit from the moderate exercise required.⁴⁵ Such recommendations are consistent with his explicit statement elsewhere that while the gods' existence is certain, the paraphernalia which surrounds them is a human invention 'to persuade the masses and for the sake of expediency and the laws'.⁴⁶ This represents a striking degree of detachment from religious forms, and clearly correlates with Aristotle's own radically different view of the divine and its relationship with the human, in which contact and approximation occur primarily in the context of philosophy and the life of reason.⁴⁷ Few writers are willing to go so far as this: Plato, for instance, cannot quite discard a certain respect for tradition in religious matters, despite his untraditional theology. This he rationalizes by the view that the performance of traditional sacred practices is likely to be closer to what is proper than their neglect or alteration; he accepts the authority role of ritual, in other words.

Moving beyond ritual alone, one writer who does appear to go as far as, and further than, Aristotle, is the author of the first extract cited at the head of this chapter. Whether it was Kritias or Euripides who wrote these lines, they come from a drama (probably entitled *Sisyphos*), and hence it would be unsafe to attribute such views to the author himself. However, such a radical opinion, making not only cult but even the existence of the divine a human fabrication, due in the first place to a sort of proto-lawgiver, seems unlikely to have been first dreamed up in order to be rejected; if not original, it should represent or distort an argument put forward in earnest. Although it would, formally, be possible to reconcile the view with a belief

in some totally different kind of divinity (which does not seem likely to be the intent of the speaker of the fragment),⁴⁸ the idea is a startling one because, like Aristotle's pronouncements on cult, it denies the possibility of divine-human interaction, as it is normally understood—and incidentally implies a privileged insight for the speaker or author, in comparison to the ordinary, deluded masses. Pregnant women do not really obtain any benefits from the deities of childbirth; human morality is not really upheld by the gods. Such views are an extension of a quite normal recognition of the human role in the formation of religious traditions, but in denying the divine role altogether they step outside normal bounds. Seen in another way, they actually reverse normal priorities; where a widespread mode of thought indicates the gods as disposers of order in our world, these show the human world imposing order on what is normally taken to be the world of the gods. In this respect, also, they represent an anomalous extension of the norm, for humans certainly regulate *ta biera* by establishing calendars, rules for the conduct of cult and so on. Still closer is the ordering role which Herodotus attributes to Homer and Hesiod (above, p. 522). In his account, the names of the gods, deriving from Egypt through the medium of the Pelasgians, were sanctioned by the oracle at Dodona; it is not clear whether the innovations of the poets should be regarded as simply an elaboration of the earlier tradition, with the same validity (or lack of it), but elsewhere Herodotus is well aware how culture-specific are the fundamentals of the concepts of the gods prevalent in his own society, remarking with some approval that the Persians 'did not consider the gods to have human form, as do the Greeks'.⁴⁹ His evident rejection of tradition here is itself traditional, as in the style of Xenophanes⁵⁰ he spurns the anthropomorphic gods of myth and cult in favour of a grander conception. Yet this is not quite all the story, for elsewhere in his work he shows a respect for and acceptance of certain of the traditions of practised religion. In particular, he is scrupulous—ostentatious, even—in not revealing matters over which a holy silence should prevail, and his regard for oracles, too, is evident even without his explicit avowal of belief at 8.77. None of this should surprise, for the writer who distorted Pindar's words νόμος ὁ πάντων βασιλεύς ('custom/law is king of all'), making them into a general principle, clearly saw them as applying equally to himself.⁵¹ As with any anthropologist, his recognition of the relativism of the rules of different societies gave him only a very limited and partial emancipation from his own cultural conditioning.

What we are dealing with here is not so much the movement Geertz invokes between a religious and an everyday perspective as the movement between two perspectives both subsumed under religion, in the broadest sense. Many of our difficulties with Greek religion will be eased if we suppose that even at one point in time, for one individual, there is not one religious stance but several. The gods of cult are notoriously different from the gods of Homer and the Panhellenic body of myth; the former may be closer to what we would recognize as religious experience, but the latter are more than a literary construct. They represent a way of looking at the divine which clearly meant something and mattered outside its poetic context. For evidence that this is so, we need only look at the criticism which they attracted, which itself begins to form a third perspective on religion, that of question and analysis: what are the gods really like? How, if at all, do the implications of myth and cult correspond to actuality? This perspective is already present, at least in embryonic

form, in the *Odyssey*, if we follow Burkert's suggestion that the song narrating the illicit sexual intercourse of Ares and Aphrodite (8.266–366) is a conscious exaggeration, almost a *reductio ad absurdum*, of the distinctive features of the Iliadic gods;⁵² its later history is well known, and has been alluded to several times in this chapter. The degree to which this perspective stands outside the religious system has often been vastly exaggerated. Modern scholars are quick to point out that the Greeks had no credal formulations, but not always so quick to see the consequences of this, which are that a wide range of opinion and speculation were not only tolerated, but inevitable. Even in systems equipped with official or quasi-official dogma, individuals will have widely differing responses to that dogma and quite divergent personal belief systems. Further, what people say they believe is often quite different from what their actions imply; and finally, people may say quite different things about their religious beliefs in different contexts and circumstances.⁵³ Many of these statements will be out of line with strict orthodoxy, but most of them will stand within the system in a broadly descriptive sense. In the case of the Greeks, it seems that the perspective of questioning and thinking about the gods soon crystallized along certain lines into a tradition of its own. By the second half of the fifth century it is a commonplace to find fault with the gods of myth, and cult was not beyond criticism either: it is in the context of their supposed lack of statues and altars that Herodotus praises the Persians for their non-anthropomorphic gods. It is of course impossible to say whether 'ordinary people', as well as the writers and intellectuals who provide our evidence, had access to this perspective, but it seems very likely that at least a 'Reader's Digest'-type version of these ideas was in wide circulation after the pithy formulations of Xenophanes. Speculation, then, would seem to take something like the place which in many religions is occupied by a more definite theology.

But the movement between perspectives is not always harmonious. Just as the 'everyday perspective' may jar with the 'religious perspective' as easily as it may complement it, so, depending both on context and on the precise position adopted, the discrepancies between the three religious perspectives can suddenly become obvious and disturbing. This is the effect, for instance, which Euripides exploits when, towards the end of a story of mythological, hyper-Homeric gods, he has Herakles, the story's main character, confess his disbelief in such gods and propose in their place a philosophical deity without needs or desires.⁵⁴ Both pictures of the divine can be accepted, even though one is so often founded on criticism of the other, but this juxtaposition is intentionally upsetting and thought-provoking. The opposite effect is suggested in a recent study of the *Sisyphos* fragment, which argues that its likely context in a satyr play would rob it of serious force;⁵⁵ but if as is likely the argument had a place in a genuine philosophical context, we can see that in such a setting speculation had advanced to a point where it disappeared from the *religious* perspective altogether. Yet the perception that religious forms may often follow lines advantageous to human society is not in itself destructive of the mythic or cultic perspective; it may be explained by a rationale like that of Plato (the gods initiate festivals out of pity for humans) or simply belong to a different area of thought and experience.

The quest for unifying factors in Greek religion, then, would seem to need

some modification in its framework. Divergent statements may appear divergent not because Greek religious thought is a chaotic jumble of random ideas, and not only because of differences in individuals and individual approaches, but their divergences can also be analysed as an effect of the adoption of different, well-established perspectives. In this chapter I have tried to examine some strands which seem to me important in Greek religion as a whole; they cannot be taken as universal keys to the whole phenomenon (others would pick out other topics), but they are recurrent, and their permutations can be traced through widely varying perspectives. Our ways of looking at the religion of the Greeks must then be conditioned by what we see as the Greeks' diverse ways of looking at their own religion.⁵⁶

NOTES

- 1 The passages are from, respectively: Kritias (or Euripides), Nauck 1 (43) F19; Plato, *Laus* 5.738B; Xenophanes F 34 DK.
- 2 See also the excellent summary in W.Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Oxford, 1985) 268–75 (henceforward *GR*; updated version of *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche* (Stuttgart, 1977)) and J.Rudhardt, *Notions fondamentales de la pensée religieuse* (Geneva, 1958) 21–38.
- 3 This aspect of divinity tends to be stressed more clearly in the word *daimon* and its derivatives.
- 4 Of course these are not the only connotations of *anthropos*; in contexts other than implicit contrast with the divine it may appear as a much more positive word. In general, it is true that the word *theos* is much more conditioned by this opposition than is *anthropos*.
- 5 Aeschylus, *Choephoroe* 59–60; Euripides, *Helen* 560.
- 6 Hdt. 1.32.1.
- 7 A translation of the most usual Greek word for cult viewed as something given to a deity (*timai*).
- 8 Cf. Burkert's definition in *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, Mass., 1987) 11: 'Mysteries were initiatory rituals of a voluntary, personal and secret character that aimed at a change of mind through experience of the sacred.' See also R.Parker, 'Early Orphism', this volume.
- 9 W.R.Connor, "'Sacred" and "secular": ἱερὰ καὶ ὄσια and the classical Athenian concept of the state', *AncSoc* 19 (1988), 161–88.
- 10 As for instance the declaration at Epidauros that the purity necessary to enter the temple consists in 'thinking *bosia*', Porph. *de abst.* 2.19. But see the cautious account of R.Parker, *Miasma* (Oxford, 1983), 322–5.
- 11 Plato, *Euthyphro* 10A.
- 12 Heraclitus, fr 102 DK.
- 13 id., fr 78 DK.
- 14 Cf. *Hipp.* 120, *Ba.* 1348, and more elaborately *Ion* 436–51.
- 15 Homer, *Odyssey* 24.350–1.
- 16 Clifford Geertz, 'Religion as a cultural system', in his *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, 1973), 87–125. The full definition is 'a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men

by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seems uniquely realistic.'

- 17 Hdt. 2.52.1: θεούς . . . ὅτι κόσμῳ θέντες τὰ πάντα πράγματα.
- 18 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 256–60, Sophocles *Oedipus at Colonus* 1381–3, Pindar, *Olympian* 8.21–3, and other references; see H.Kantorowicz, *AJA* 58 (1953), 65ff. The *Oedipus at Colonus* reference responds to an earlier claim (1267–8) that Aidos is seated by Zeus; although in the context this indicates a plea for forgiveness, in general terms it personifies the restraint which lies behind all moral codes.
- 19 *Cypria* F 7 Davies; worship at Rhamnous, S.Solders, *Die ausserstädtischen Kulte und die Einigung Attikas* (Lund, 1931), 67–9.
- 20 Euripides, *Troades* 886.
- 21 See J.de Romilly, *La loi dans la pensée grecque: des origines à Aristote* (Paris, 1971) 25–38. M.Ostwald, 'Was there a concept ἄγραφος νόμος in classical Greece?', *Phronesis supp.* 1 (1973), 70–104 (esp. 102–4), concludes that the phrase is used too variously to be a real 'concept', but the various uses of the phrase do not, in my view, forbid us to identify the usage I am discussing.
- 22 Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus* 862–910 (895–6: εἰ γὰρ αἱ τοιαῖδε πράξεις τίμαι, τί δεῖ με). χορεύειν;
- 23 Hesiod, *Works and Days* 225–47.
- 24 *Iliad* 16.384–92, *Odyssey* 19.109–14.
- 25 Some variants of this story-type are discussed in J.Fontenrose, 'The hero as athlete', *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 1 (1968), 73–104; others in M.Visser, 'Worship your enemies: aspects of the cult of heroes in ancient Greece', *HTbR* 75 (1982), 403–28; a third subtype is exemplified at Paus. 2.3.6–7, 8.23.6. Other variants (some listed in Visser, n. 44) tone down or omit the 'criminal' element.
- 26 On which see the work of P.Vidal-Naquet (esp. 'Valeurs religieuses et mythiques de la terre et du sacrifice dans l'Odyssée', *Annales E.S.C.* 25 (1970), 1278–97), J.-P.Vernant (esp. 'À la table des hommes' in Vernant and Detienne (eds), *La cuisine du sacrifice* (Paris, 1979), 37–132, and M.Detienne, esp. *Dionysos mis à mort* (Paris, 1977), 35–60 (Eng. tr. *Dionysos Slain* (Baltimore, 1979) 35–67). All three articles are translated in R.L.Gordon (ed.), *Myth, Religion and Society* (Cambridge and Paris, 1981).
- 27 Harvey Yunis, *A New Creed: Fundamental Religious Beliefs in the Athenian Polis and Euripidean Drama* (*Hypomnemata* 91, Göttingen, 1988) *passim*, esp.43–5. Cities other than Athens are unlikely to be radically different in this regard.
- 28 See the discussion in Yunis, op. cit., 81–7.
- 29 de Romilly, op. cit., 27.
- 30 It not infrequently appears in a rationalized form, according to which the divine operates through the medium of natural processes: see the explicit remarks of Plutarch on αἰτία and τέλος in *Pericles* 6.
- 31 For the connection, see E.Shils, *Center and Periphery* (Chicago, 1975), xxxiii–xxxviii, 127–34.
- 32 Hdt.7.141–3. On prophecy and practical calculation, see R.Parker in A.Powell (ed.), *Classical Sparta: techniques behind her success* (London, 1989), 158–60.
- 33 Thus Hdt. 1.147.2: 'all those are Ionians who originate from Athens and who celebrate the Apaturia.'

- 34 See Burkert, *GR* 58–9, summarizing the argument of his *Homo Necans* (Berlin, 1972; Eng. tr. Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983).
- 35 Thuc. 2.47.5, 52.3–4.
- 36 Thuc. 3.81–4, esp. 82.3.
- 37 On this issue, see Burkert, *GR* 253–4; also J.Plescia, *The Oath and Perjury in Ancient Greece* (Tallahassee, 1970) 47–50, and J.D.Mikalson, *Athenian Popular Religion* (Chapel Hill, 1983), 37–8.
- 38 The subject of Plato's *Cratylus*; see most recently M.D.Palmer, *Names, Reference and Correctness in Plato's Cratylus* (New York, 1989).
- 39 Hdt. 2.53.2.
- 40 Cf Hesiod, *Theogony* 27–8.
- 41 Pl. *Laws* 2.653D.
- 42 *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* 474–9.
- 43 Pl. *Laws* 8.828A–C.
- 44 [Xen.] *Atb. Pol.* 2.9.
- 45 Ar. *Pol.* 7.1335B.
- 46 Ar. *Met.* 8.1074B.
- 47 For a brief exposition of this aspect of Aristotle's view of the divine, see Patrick Atherton, in A.H.Armstrong (ed.), *Classical Mediterranean Spirituality* (London, 1986), 121–34.
- 48 Assuming that the lines are from a satyr play and that the speaker is Sisyphos himself: see below, p. 525 and n. 55. That myths may be elaborated beyond what is certain, perhaps for the purposes of social expediency, is not uncommonly stated: as well as Aristotle cited above see Eur. *El.* 743–5, Isok. *Busiris* 24–5. In this group even the verse passage has a more serious tone, but none of them states that the actual existence of the gods is a fabrication. An interesting cross-cultural parallel to 'Sisyphos' emerges from the discourse of a contemporary Hindu holy man, reported in Kirin Narayan, *Storytellers, Saints and Scoundrels: Folk Narrative in Hindu Religious Teaching* (Philadelphia, 1989), 227: 'Who were all these religions [*dharmas*] made for? For people. So they can live in justice, in righteousness, and order, and not do ill to others.... Using their own wisdom, they made rules of how things should be done. These rules are Bhagavan [God].' In a very different religious context, this example shows how the 'Sisyphos' view need not be a secular one: the swami declares that the concept of Bhagavan arose 'with the inspiration of the *ātman*', thus referring the whole process to a higher reality. In our case the view that the traditional gods are of human origin could be reconciled with the existence of, for instance, a non-anthropomorphic deity like that of Xenophanes (frs. 23–6)—even if this is scarcely what 'Sisyphos' himself has in mind.
- 49 Hdt. 1.131.
- 50 Xenophanes, F 23–6 DK.
- 51 Hdt. 3.38.4: in Pindar (fr. 169 Snell-Maehler) referring to a specific 'custom' or 'law', that might is right.
- 52 W.Burkert, 'Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite', *RbM* 101 (1960) 130–44.
- 53 See T.Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion* (New York and London, 1967), 69–70; R.Gombrich, *Precept and Practice: Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon* (Oxford, 1971), esp. 4–6 (on 'cognitive' and 'affective' beliefs and value systems); S.B.Daniel, 'The tool-box approach of the Tamil to the issues of moral responsibility and human destiny', in C.F.Keyes and E.V.Daniel (eds), *Karma: An Anthropological Inquiry* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1983), 27–62.
- 54 Eur. *HF* 1340–6.

- 55 M.Davies, 'Sisyphus and the invention of religion', *BICS* 36 (1989), 16–32, esp. 29–30.
- 56 I should like to thank Nicholas Purcell and Richard Rutherford for help with various points in the writing of this chapter; they are not guilty of the arguments expounded. The same applies to Anton Powell, who made many helpful comments and suggestions on a first draft.

IONIAN INQUIRIES

On understanding the Presocratic beginnings of science



Edward Hussey

1. INTRODUCTION

A starting-point for understanding the Presocratics is the rough-and-ready remark that, in their theories, there are some bits that ‘look like science’ and some bits that ‘look like philosophy’.¹ Here I concentrate on the ‘science’, and try to build up an overall picture of this theorizing, and the ways in which it was like and unlike science as now understood.

The first step is to describe in general terms the nature of Presocratic ‘science’, using the earliest witnesses. One must not be restricted here by the normal usage of that convenient label ‘Presocratic’. Some Hippocratic writings are also possibly important evidence for what was going on. (Less directly, so are the early historians.)² So, first of all, I try to set out (secs. 2 to 5) those features of the enterprise which are found or implied in many texts, with special attention to the cardinal concept of *phusis*. This is no more than an outline synthetic sketch, with indications of the evidence. One problem is how far it is legitimate to assume for the Milesians features which can be proved only for later Presocratics. Another is that in many cases the evidence is indirect; these people were not much given to public statements about their own methodology and systematic aims. In spite of these difficulties, it is not only useful but necessary to make the attempt at a general statement about (as Aristotle would say) the ‘matter’ and the ‘form’ of Presocratic theorizing, before going on to the questions of its ‘moving cause’ or origin and its ‘end’ or point.

I then look (sec. 6) at a particular question which has caused difficulty: the role of ‘the divine’ and of teleology in early Ionian theorizing.

I then discuss the general nature of Presocratic ‘study of nature’, its relation to earlier cosmologies and to modern science (sec. 7). I try to improve on the uninformative, if not positively misleading, account in terms of ‘rationality’; and go on to draw morals (sec. 8) about the business of understanding the Presocratics. In these sections as elsewhere, I have tried to point out (though I have not been able to engage fully with) the two principal obstacles to understanding Ionian natural philosophy. These are just that we do not yet understand Aristotle well enough, and that we do not yet understand modern science well enough.³

2. THE UNIVERSE AS THE PRIMARY OBJECT OF STUDY

The Presocratic ‘natural philosophers’ took, as the object of their thinking, ‘all things’ (*ta panta*) or ‘the universe’ (*to pan, to holon*).⁴ This in itself was, it seems, a novelty. Earlier cosmologies (those of the ancient Near East, and Hesiod’s *Theogony*) do seem to aim at some kind of completeness in their coverage; they try to account for the origins and functioning of the whole of the presently observable world-order. But they do not seem to raise explicitly the question of whether that order is ‘everything there is’; correspondingly, the spatial and temporal boundaries of the world-order, and whatever may lie beyond, are left ill-defined or wholly unspecified.

The Ionians’ search for an account of ‘everything’, i.e. ‘whatever there may be’, led them to push back these boundaries to thought. For the conscious intent to consider ‘everything’ leads immediately to the question whether the limits, in space and in time, of possible human observation, i.e. of the known world-order, are also the limits of the *universe*. Some, perhaps most, answered negatively; hence the postulation of a universe infinite in space and in time. Once the barrier of human limitations is broken in thought, given any limited space or time-stretch, we can always conceive of a space or a time-stretch outside and containing it; why stop anywhere in particular?⁵

It might seem hopeless, though, to try to know (or plausibly conjecture) anything about the universe generally, particularly if it is infinite in space and time. What guarantee could there be that this vast ‘thing’ was knowable or intelligible to human minds, or was even a single thing in any real sense? These questions involve epistemological worries which have repeatedly surfaced in the history of science. They were expressed explicitly as early as Xenophanes. Awareness of problems about human knowledge is also evident in Heraclitus, and in some of the fifth-century Presocratics.⁶ It is not clear that any of the ‘natural philosophers’ claimed full-blooded *knowledge* of the truth of their theories. What must be true is that they held their theorizing to be at least probable, and in some sense an advance towards the truth: it was not meant as an idle game.

Necessarily, then, they assumed not only that the universe was a possible object of study, but also that it was, at least in principle and in outline, knowable and intelligible *as a whole* to human minds.⁷ This is another enormous assumption, and again a revolutionary step by contrast with what had preceded. Earlier cosmologists, even those who like Hesiod gave a unified *origin* for the observable world-order, seem to end up by ‘giving in’, as it were, to its phenomenological plurality. There is in the end no real unity, beyond the loose unity of kinship.

An ambitious programme, generated and driven on by novel and bold assumptions, and gnawed from the start by epistemological doubt: this is the picture suggested by a variety of evidence. It is also a picture of science.

3. THE RULES OF THE GAME: (A) UNITY, ECONOMY AND SYMMETRY IN THE THEORETICAL SET-UP

By ‘the rules of the game’ are meant both the rules governing the construction of theories, and the rules of argument by which those theories were criticized and

justified. These were two sides of the same coin. Once again, the scanty earlier evidence has to be supplemented from the late fifth and the fourth centuries, so that there is a real danger of reading too much back into the Milesians in particular.

By the 'theoretical set-up' of an Ionian theory is simply meant the entities of which, ultimately, it was claimed, the universe consisted, and in terms of which it was to be understood. For understanding to be possible, each basic entity had to have specified its essential properties, those which were taken to determine its whole nature and behaviour.

In the earlier period at least, it may be that cut-and-dried specifications were not given explicitly, even if some statement of fundamental entities did appear at the start. Not until Parmenides is there clear evidence of a deliberate effort to supply a clear statement of their essential properties.⁸ Aristotle and Theophrastos complain, at times, about lack of clarity and definiteness in earlier Presocratics, or appear uncertain as to the correct explication (in their terms) of the systems they were describing.⁹

The theorists observed certain formal principles of theory-construction; but as far as we know they did not say much about them. Aristotle, in his own examination of the foundations of physics (in the first four books of the *Physics*), makes some reference to Presocratic examples.¹⁰ We know enough, though, to be able to discern inductively certain general ideas at work.

The theoretical set-up had to possess real overall unity. This is a strong demand, most easily satisfied by postulating only one basic entity, as found in the earliest and some later Presocratics. If two or more were postulated, the relationship between them had to be specified clearly, and they had to fit together in a formally satisfactory unified pattern. That is, there had in any case to be some overall unity, both conceptual and functional. (Thus, for example, the conceptual unity of Empedocles' four-root theory is expressed by the essential symmetry as between the four, and the antithetical pairings of their essential properties; the functional unity by their orderly succession in the cosmic cycle.) It seems to be owing to this demand that Presocratic theories, in contrast to earlier cosmological stories, have the same 'slimmed-down' and conceptually elegant aspect as modern scientific ones. Moreover, the universe, and the basic entities (if distinct from the universe itself), are necessarily, as a result, essentially *uniform*, in the large scale and the long term.

Closely linked to the requirement of functional unity in the theory is that of explanatory power, economy and efficiency. Everything must be explained, and explained easily, in terms of the basic theoretical set-up. This is one kind of 'simplicity' that a theory can have.

But how was such explanatory power to be achieved? The underlying ideas are that one represents many diverse phenomena as variations on one underlying theme; and many complex entities as the result of intelligible combinations of a few simple ones. The theory's merit is to be judged by how well it functions explanatorily as a whole. The systematic effort to achieve explanatory economy and power, by these means, is evident in the Presocratics, and this too might be thought to distinguish their enterprise from all previous cosmology we know of, and to align it with modern scientific theorizing in another vital respect.¹¹ But we must not underestimate the strength of the effort for unity even in those earlier cosmologies we can get some grasp of. Hesiod, for instance, is manifestly striving to maximize explanatory simplicity

within the constraints of his assumptions. What divides him from the Presocratics is not so much the goal (a unified understanding), as those constraints themselves and whatever generates them.¹²

The demand contained in the ‘principle of sufficient reason’, namely, that there should be no unexplained asymmetries or ‘*ad hoc*’ features, is just one particular facet of the demand for explanatory efficiency. It finds extensive application in a maximally uniform universe. It is connected to the demand for ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ in nature. These may have partly been intended as *analogies* with human political systems.¹³ They can also be understood on their own as recognitions of the importance of symmetry and efficiency of explanation.¹⁴

The argumentative form of the ‘principle of sufficient reason’ is the question: ‘Why this particular thing/time/place rather than any other?’ The most striking early application is Anaximander’s explanation of why the earth rests in the middle of the cosmos.¹⁵ But the essential overall uniformity of the Ionians’ universe, in both its spatial and its temporal extensions, is even more important structurally.

4. THE RULES OF THE GAME: (B) ANALOGIES AND *EIKOS*-REASONING

The use of analogy by the Presocratics has been studied by Geoffrey Lloyd in his book *Polarity and Analogy*, which can be referred to for full documentation.¹⁶ We have to distinguish the use of analogy (1) in justifying and expounding the theoretical set-up, and the account of the general nature of the total system (universe and cosmoi; or cosmos as a whole, if this cosmos is the whole universe); (2) in giving accounts of particular phenomena. In either case, the analogy may be a substantive part of the *justification* for the theory; or it may be a *heuristic*, theory-building, explanation-suggesting device; or it may be no more than an *expository* device, a way of supplementing the lack of technical terminology. Mixed and intermediate cases are possible. Our evidence is usually simply not strong enough to show by itself the amount of probative weight carried by the analogy itself.

It is reasonable, though, in view of the evidence, to assume that, in theorizing about the universe as a whole, overall analogies were used heuristically, and, correspondingly, as argumentative supports.¹⁷ This is what would be expected, if the aim was not knowledge but ‘plausible opinion’ in the style of Xenophanes. Such an aim would in turn naturally lead to the use of analogies; for what counts as ‘plausible’ is determined by, and in terms of, our immediate experience.

Thus, the three types of Greek cosmic ‘model’ defined by Lloyd—the living organism, the artefact, the political entity—all have obvious appeal to a cosmological theory-builder. Living organisms are complex beings, but as a rule fairly predictable, and with a distinct overall individuality and unity. The same is true of artefacts and of political entities. Another model of the same general type (not mentioned by Lloyd) is that of the human mind (as viewed from inside, by introspection), which may have been used by Heraclitus.¹⁸

Analogies may also have been used to give, in particular cases, not full-blooded explanations, but rather an indication that an explanation must be possible. An

analogy between phenomenon A (to be explained) and phenomenon B (already explained or, at least, securely located within the realm of experience) will suggest that A is explicable if B is. The implication is that the analogy indicates the possibility of an explanation, and at least an outline of how it could go.¹⁹

The use of analogies to construct plausible theories accounts for the obvious affinity between such analogies and the appeal to considerations of *eikos*, 'what is likely' (the corresponding verb is *eikazein*). This appeal is found, with application to theory-construction and historical criticism, in Herodotus, Thucydides and in the Hippocratic writers (it is also widespread in the contexts of practical deliberation and forensic argument). It applies a probabilistic estimate (not quantified) to questions at some remove from experience. In the historians, and in forensic argument, these are mostly questions of the now inaccessible past. It appeals, necessarily, to antecedently established notions of what is likely or unlikely to happen in some familiar realm: for example, to claim that a person of that sort, in that sort of position, would have been likely (in virtue of certain constant features of human nature) to act in this way and not in that other way.

If we think of the formal requirements for theorizing as representing the 'top-down' aspect of Presocratic theories, then analogy and *eikos*-reasoning are part of the 'bottom-up' aspect. In other words, in the end it was 'ordinary experience' that the theories (however abstract and intellectually elegant their construction) had to appeal to, for analogies and probabilities which would command understanding and assent. But we must always recognize the inherent indeterminacy of the notion of 'ordinary experience'. It is doubtful whether 'our' (late twentieth-century Western) notion of 'ordinary experience' corresponds at all closely or unambiguously to that of Ionians in the sixth century BC. In the first place, science itself, in its theory and in its applications through technology, transforms the notion of 'ordinary experience'. Second, even at any given time and in any given culture, the notion is an indeterminate and ambiguous one. That is part of the reason why a naïve appeal to 'common sense' as a source or touchstone of Presocratic theories is so unilluminating.²⁰ It must be true, of course, that Presocratic theorists felt themselves constrained by what they took to be 'the facts'. But they will have found, as scientists always do, that what 'the facts' are, and how they should be appealed to, is already an ambiguous and contestable matter. Even the most basic aspects of everyday life, and the results of the most careful experiments, are always open to reinterpretation.²¹

5. THE RULES OF THE GAME: (C) THE CONCEPT OF *PHUSIS*

The divergences from modern scientific thinking and practice revealed in the previous section are real, and must not be denied. Of course scientists do use vague heuristic analogies and vague reasonings of all sorts, when trying to *construct* theories; but they are not supposed to appeal to them (except as expository devices) when presenting a theory in its final form. A satisfactory account of Ionian theorizing must try to account for the divergences, and to explain how the indeterminacy inherent in 'analogical theorizing' could be thought to be acceptable.

I suggest that the key concept needed here for removing these difficulties, and for

completing the understanding of Ionian theorizing, is that of *phusis*. The Ionian enterprise was in the fifth and fourth centuries often referred to in such terms as *peri phuseos* (*tou holou, ton panton*) *legein* (or *graphein* or *historia*): ‘speaking (or ‘writing’ or ‘inquiry’) about the *phusis* (of everything, the universe)’. So it is no far-fetched hypothesis that the concept of *phusis* was central.²²

The concept of *phusis* involved a compound of empirical content and theoretical interpretation.²³ The *phusis* of any (type of) thing comprised all those properties that were observed in nature to be its invariable properties. These were then theoretically ‘baptized’, i.e. they were specified, within the theory, as being (all of) its essential properties.

This notion of *phusis*, though it was a constraint, did not determine by itself the specific form which the theories took. It did not determine the number and the identity of the fundamental entities, nor the general nature of their interaction within the (usually infinite) universe. Yet, if explanations had to be given ultimately in terms of *phusis*, that demand already severely limited the possibilities for ultimate entities.²⁴ They had to be either (1) directly observable things; or (2) ‘enriched’ entities combined out of observables; or (3) entities formed by ‘impoverishment’ of observables. Examples of all three kinds occur. Thus, (1) Anaxagoras’ ‘Mind’, and his types of stuffs, are intended to be understood as things directly observable.²⁵ (2) The Milesians’ ultimate entities, ‘water’, ‘the infinite’ and ‘air’, are combinations from observables. Thales’ ‘water’ was (not just ordinary ‘water’, but) water enriched by the properties of life and intelligence.²⁶ Anaximander’s ‘infinite’ was not just ‘something infinite’, but something infinite which was also living and intelligent, etc. (3) The Atomists’ atoms and void were ‘impoverished’ observables: matter and space stripped by abstraction of everything superfluous to the theory.

It is the notion of *phusis*, too, that removes the apparent threat of theoretical indeterminacy. The explicit specification of essential properties is not necessary if these can be understood to be those which belong to the *phusis*.

The argumentative form of the concept of *phusis* is the claim of natural necessity, abundant in Herodotus and some Hippocratic writers in the form ‘it must needs be that...(*anagke*)’ and ‘it is not possible that...(*oukb hoion te*)’. The ‘necessity of nature’ was recognized as a characteristic theme of the physicists (as well as of those theorists who employed the *nomos-phusis* antithesis).²⁷

The notion of *phusis* is thus the characteristic empirical anchor or ‘Archimedean point’ of Ionian theorizing. It is what gives partial meaning and justification to the vague and misleading claim that the Presocratics based themselves on ‘common sense’.²⁸ At the same time, it also grounds the notion of natural necessity, and foreshadows the notion of essence. All this explains why, in the fifth and fourth centuries, Ionian science could be represented as preoccupied with the question ‘what is there?’, or (taking ontology materially, as Aristotle thought the Presocratics mostly did) ‘what is the world made of?’. Aristotle could claim that his own investigation of *substance* replaced, or redirected, ‘that question asked of old and now and always: “what is it that is?” (*ti to on*)’.²⁹

To say that the notion of *phusis* is grounded in ‘ordinary observation’ of course is not to remove completely the problems, whether historical or philosophical, attaching to the notion. It remained, in fact, a concept of essentially debatable

application, as such an anchor-concept was bound to be. It was originally intended, I have claimed, to indicate the aspects of the external world which we seem to be able to grasp immediately as objectively regular in their behaviour. But why, for instance, should it not be extended to the 'internal world' of the mind?³⁰ In any case, it is always debatable what does count as 'external' or as 'regular': are colours, for example, or rainbows, part of the external world? Is the stability of the earth something 'regular'? The notion of *phusis* was bound, then, to focus debate on the questions (scientific and philosophical) of the nature and reliability of sense-perception; and in fact we find these questions becoming steadily more prominent in Presocratic thinking.³¹ This shows once again how the Presocratic enterprise, like science nowadays, had a natural tendency to transform the understanding and delimitation of its own empirical basis; and to generate philosophical questions in the process.

The concept of *phusis*, if it was as described, would also have been the structural tie holding together, and balancing, the demands of formal theorizing and those of empiricism within the enterprise. There was, as there always is, a natural *internal* tension between the 'top-down' and the 'bottom-up' approaches, between the exhilarating generalities and the awkward particular facts. (This too is a feature of modern science.) It is possible, for example, even with the wretchedly incomplete evidence we have, to trace the Milesians' efforts to reconcile their grand theoretical vision of the unity of the universe with the apparently irreducible multiplicity of everyday experience. In so doing, they invoked the *phusis* of everyday things—water and air, animals, human societies—and made it carry a heavy theoretical load.

6. THEOLOGY AND TELEOLOGY IN IONIAN THEORIES

There is no reason in principle why Ionian theoretical cosmology should not have operated with a notion of 'god' or 'the divine', provided of course that that notion satisfied the general 'rules of the game', as set out above. In particular, if 'the divine' were to be fundamental in the explanatory set-up, it would have to be something genuinely unified, and well-defined in its nature by certain clearly specified essential properties having a clear connection with ordinary experience. It would also, to be functionally efficient, have to be in principle wholly intelligible to human minds. It had, therefore, to be rather unlike any traditional Greek conception of a god or of the gods collectively.

There were, in principle, three theological options for an Ionian cosmologist: (1) atheism; (2) affirmation of a transcendent deity outside the scope of 'natural science'; (3) affirmation of an intelligible deity (or deities), under the constraints given above, falling within the scope of 'natural science'. (This last option includes the atomist case, where gods were supposed to exist and yet not to be explanatorily fundamental.)

Option (1), atheism, is not attested until the late fifth century. Atheism or religious scepticism was the obvious conclusion to be drawn from, for example, the sophistic accounts of the human origins of religious institutions, and from attacks on the belief in divine justice and providence. Presumably there were in fact some who were atheists, though they had good reason to keep their opinions hidden.³²

Option (2), the transcendent god, may well have been that of Xenophanes, and of other thinkers (such as Parmenides and Empedocles) who stood partly outside the 'natural philosophy' enterprise. But it was option (3) that was seen, at least from the late fifth century on, as characteristic of the Ionian *phusiologoi*.³³

Later commentators, from Plato and Aristotle onwards, have found the 'scientific theology' of the Ionians difficult to understand and appreciate. In recent times it has sometimes been seen as something incidental and negligible, either a thin disguise for atheism, or as a muddled hangover from earlier ways of thinking. Others have taken it to show that the Ionians were not scientists after all.³⁴ It is often difficult to set aside modern preconceptions (derived from modern science, from transcendental monotheism on the Christian pattern, and debates about their allegedly conflicting claims); and difficult to know what general guiding conceptions should be used instead. With the help of the outline of 'natural philosophy' already sketched, we can make progress.

The essence of Ionian 'physical theology' is that the basic item (or one of the basic items) in the explanatory set-up is taken to have, among its basic properties, those of being (a) alive, (b) intelligent, (c) purposeful, (d) able to act with infinite power on the contents of the universe, including itself. It seems further to have been taken to be (e) omniscient and (f) (within the limits imposed by the theory itself) omnipotent. Hence this, 'the divine' and its purposes, is the ultimate explanation of the large-scale structure, in space and in time, of the universe, in so far as that too is not dictated by the explanatory set-up itself. There is therefore a form of teleology inherent in this kind of theory.³⁵

The explanatory economy of this kind of theory is fairly obvious. It enabled the Ionians to give a kind of explanation for certain centrally important phenomena. (1) One was the existence in our cosmos of living beings, of intelligent beings, of purposive beings. If you do not begin with something living, and something intelligent, then you have to explain life and intelligence as derived from dead, unconscious stuff; which may well seem a hopeless task. (2) Another was the existence of change and movement generally: 'the divine' was, as a living thing, naturally a source of movement. (3) Another was the existence of order and apparent purposefulness in the cosmos: this was derived from the purposeful planning of 'the divine'.³⁶

Within this concept of 'the divine' is united, then, everything that is needed to complete the explanatory task. It may have seemed, to most natural philosophers, to promise the only kind of unity reasonably to be hoped for in the universe. The unity of living beings, and the unity of minds, are impressive kinds of unity. Animals unite dissimilar components, and involve change and yet stability through change. So too with the conscious mind, which also unites dissimilars and involves change and stability, and therefore may seem more promising, as a model to explain the universe, than mere material unity. This is particularly so, if the lawlike behaviour of the contents of the universe is not only taken as part of the explanations but also as one of the things to be explained. Thus 'the divine', and its intelligence and justice, are meant as a substantive and functional part of the whole theoretical construction.³⁷

One objection that has been made to this kind of reconstruction is that it is in conflict with other parts of Aristotle's evidence. This objection is based upon misunderstanding: of the nature and purpose of Aristotle's remarks on his predecessors generally, or of his concept of 'cause' in particular. (Briefly, in his survey of the

‘causes and principles’ employed by the Presocratics, *Metaphysics* I, 3 to 5, Aristotle gives no hint of anything like an Aristotelian final cause, or even an Aristotelian efficient cause, in the Milesians. But the reason is that he does not find, in them, any clear explicit *statement* of anything like his own concepts of these things. He is prepared to admit that in an implicit, unselfconscious, blundering way the earlier people may have *used* these notions or ones like them (*Metaphysics* I 10, 993a13–24.)

Other objections (apart from the question-begging one that such a theory is ‘not scientific’) are that it is unintelligible, or too vague and incoherent. It might be asked how anyone could ever be supposed to understand the idea of, say, ‘intelligent water’ or ‘purposive air’. But this is to look at matters the wrong way round, from the *physis*-theorists’ point of view. The claim is that the *physis* of (e.g.) water includes life and intelligence.³⁸ This in itself is no more and no less difficult to understand than the observed fact of life and intelligence inhabiting animal bodies. The difficult question that the theorist faces is, rather, the following one: why then do we not see signs of life and intelligence in ordinary everyday water or air? And on this question there is room for argument; perhaps we do in fact see such signs, but overlook or misinterpret them. The point is that the theory, like all scientific theories, goes substantially beyond ordinary experience and offers a reinterpretation of it.

The charges of vagueness and incoherence were in the long run more damaging. They were probably made as early as the later fifth century. In any case, it was in the later fifth century that sceptical arguments about theology appeared, and the early Atomists made a radical break with this kind of ‘natural theology’, though in other ways remaining within the tradition of *phusiologia*.

7. THE THEORETICAL INTELLECT UNBOUND

Detailed study of the evidence undermines any simplistic, one-dimensional story about the Presocratics. In particular, Ionian theorizing turns out to have been in important ways both like and unlike what we now call ‘science’. To insist on the scientific- or philosophical-looking aspects and to play down or reject any others is not good method.

Yet it is also obviously mistaken to deny that sixth-century Ionia produced something that was genuinely new, and that its striking and novel features were significantly like scientific and philosophical theorizing. They are, for one thing, connected with later ancient science and philosophy by a direct and evident line of descent. Equally, it is just not convincing to claim that the Ionians were merely continuing ancient Near Eastern or any other cosmologies by other means.

Having uttered these cautions, I would now like to outline what I hope is a better proposal for the understanding of the Presocratics in their novelty and in their relations to science and to philosophy.

Earlier, it was suggested that the Presocratics had: (1) a notion of ‘objective reality’; (2) a programmatic demand that it should be intelligible as a whole; (3) the outlines of a method for finding and representing it as intelligible. It cannot be stated dogmatically that no one before them had had this combination of aims and methods. Apart from the obvious point that our evidence for earlier thinking is excessively

scanty, it might plausibly be argued that some of the speculative cosmogonies and theologies of the ancient Near East are products of a similar programme.³⁹ And yet, the fact remains that the ancient Near East had no explosive outburst of theorizing like the one seen in sixth- to fourth-century Greece; nor did it produce philosophy; nor anything like science, apart from specialized accumulations of knowledge in restricted areas.⁴⁰

What seems different in sixth-century Ionia is not, then, the activity of the theoretical intellect, as such, but its adoption of a naturally 'self-developing' programme of investigation. Can we identify the decisive ingredients?

First, the complete freedom in the face of traditional and generally accepted ideas must be relevant, and must be not unconnected with political freedom. The Presocratics are clearly associated with frank and radical criticisms of the most revered authorities known to the Greeks on religious matters: Homer and Hesiod.

Such freedom is only a negative matter, though, and in any case there cannot be forthright criticism of tradition unless one is sure enough already of an alternative 'Archimedean point' from which to criticize. The achievement of political freedom in the face of tradition was, perhaps, the removal of an external obstacle. The explosive outburst already mentioned suggests that some such external obstacle had been removed.⁴¹ But it does not help to identify the positive factors.

Second, then, I suggest that the essential new ingredient was closely connected with (and almost defined by) the adoption of the *formal* demands on theories, as listed in section 3. Ancient Near Eastern and earlier Greek thinking (with isolated possible exceptions)⁴² is more closely and obviously tied to, and 'intimidated by', the phenomenal world in all its multiplicity and lack of absoluteness, and the world of religious cult and belief in all its complexity. To give a central place to completely formal, abstract, logically absolute properties of theories and theoretical entities (for example, essential unity or universal uniformity of behaviour), entails a new kind of freedom from the phenomenal world. This is not, of course, inconsistent with *respect* for the phenomena as such, and it is also characteristic of science and philosophy. The formal demands are the product of an *abstract* manner of conceiving of reality as a whole. This is not the same as conceiving of reality as itself entirely abstract (which the 'natural philosophers' obviously did not). It means going behind the phenomena to a 'hidden structure' (*harmonie aphanes*, as Heraclitus expressed it) which is postulated as something abstract like, for example, the structure shown by a geometrical diagram.⁴³

'Reality is (ultimately, fundamentally) to be known as a whole, and by way of abstraction': that might have been the rallying-cry of the Presocratic cosmologists. It is no accident that this period also sees the beginnings of mathematics as a systematic and abstract study.⁴⁴

It was a reform of thinking, a freeing of the mind from traditional habits; a 'Copernican revolution' on a grand scale. It also involved a new self-awareness of the abstracting theoretical mind as something autonomous, recognizing no court of appeal higher than itself, and as something universal, capable in principle of investigating anything whatever.⁴⁵

It is this reform of thinking that seems to be inadequately gestured at, when people talk obscurely (as they often do) about the 'rationality' of the Presocratics. It

is repeatedly stated, as if it were illuminating, that ‘rationality’ (as opposed to the alleged ‘irrationality’ of myth or of ‘mythical thinking’) is something characteristic of the Presocratics. Yet the concept of *rationality* is itself so elusive and contested that the use of the word by itself is quite uninformative. Nor is it at all clear that pre-scientific thinking is in any useful sense ‘irrational’. (What *may* be being vaguely gestured at, by the use of the word ‘rationality’ in this context, is the ideal of explanatory efficiency discussed in sec. 3 above.)⁴⁶

It is from this point of view, too, that we can begin to make sense of the miscellaneous and at first sight contradictory early evidence about the tone, style and self-presentation of the writings of the early natural philosophers.⁴⁷ Some surviving theoretical treatises in the Hippocratic collection, and surviving fragments of the Presocratics (Anaxagoras and Diogenes of Apollonia particularly), show an interesting mixture of high-flown eloquence and close exposition of detail, as with a lawyer addressing a jury. The forensic comparison may be apt. Presumably these works were composed in the expectation that they would be read aloud to a general audience, as well as used for private study.⁴⁸ Public readings were, after all, the cheapest, easiest and most efficient means of disseminating ideas. This assumption explains the eloquent passages, the general conciseness and avoidance of over-technical discussion; also the subordination, detectable for example in the fragments of Anaxagoras, of methodical arrangement to expository considerations. Hence too the emphasis visible in some places, and in the doxography, on the giving of explanations of particularly striking phenomena (rainbows, thunder and lightning, earthquakes, the Nile flood, etc.).

The tone of some of these writings has been felt as egotistic, but that is misleading. The message they carry is rather: ‘This is my opinion about these difficult matters. It, and no other opinion, makes them intelligible; as you will see, if you think things over.’ The ‘egotism’ is dictated by the situation and aim of the writer. The overall mood is that of theoretical optimism; the image intended to be projected is not that of the dogmatic sage, but that of the acute and diligent inquirer.⁴⁹

The ‘rules of the game’ described inductively in sections 3 to 5, were not formulated explicitly, as far as is known. But it was by increasingly self-conscious use of them that the theoretical thinking of the sixth and fifth centuries gradually defined itself. That thinking was originally neither exactly ‘science’ nor exactly ‘philosophy’, but as it defined itself it progressively divided itself as well. The incipient split is already visible in Xenophanes.⁵⁰

Applying the rules led to abstract accounts of the concrete realities of nature. The underlying abstract structure might be guessed rather than fully grasped; and it might be modelled by the behaviour of a mind or a city just as well as by that of a pebble or a wheel. Such teleology as was involved did not exclude ‘mechanical’ explanations, which did most of the detailed work. Though there was little of any systematic experiment, a corpus of ideas about the mechanical workings of the material world began to be accumulated.⁵¹

The ‘rules of the game’ also necessarily led to critical debate of the most fundamental kind. As noted in sections 2 to 5 above, they already contained, like every scientific and philosophical enterprise, tensions, circularities and ambiguities which led to conflict and dissension: about methods and aims, about the appeal to ‘reasonableness’

and to ‘experience’, about the dual commitment both to overall simplicity and to respect for the detail of the phenomena. It is true that little unambiguous evidence survives of such debates from before the mid-fifth century, when Herodotus critically discusses at length the earlier theories about the Nile flood.⁵² In their works written for a wider public, it seems likely that the earlier Presocratics criticized their rivals only briefly, in passing. But that was, presumably, a matter of stylistic convention and of the audience envisaged; it is simply implausible (given what we know of the ways of philosophers and scientists) to suppose that there were no meetings, no discussions, no specialized writings privately circulated.

By the very nature of their enterprise, the natural philosophers were led further and further into debates about first principles with their colleagues. This is not to say that their theories were *more* open to critical appraisal than those of their predecessors, as is sometimes claimed. The freedom to discuss and criticize theories rationally was certainly necessary and important, though not necessarily new. Rather, the ‘stripped-down’, abstract style of theorizing made the existence and the nature of disagreements more obvious, while at the same time the shared appeal to intrinsic ‘reasonableness’ or explanatory efficiency (rather than authority or tradition) made disagreements far less theoretically tolerable. Every natural philosopher was therefore necessarily drawn into debates both about details and about first principles.

8. CONCLUSION

I have offered the outlines of a general story about the Presocratic beginnings of science, and some indications of what the evidence is and how it supports the story. The story has its controversial elements, but this is not the place to defend them at length.

Regrettably, I have not discussed one very important problem: the interpretation of Aristotle’s evidence. Misunderstandings of what Aristotle said about the Presocratics have confused matters for a long time, and will continue to do so until Aristotle’s own natural philosophy is better understood.⁵³

The story I have given avoids assuming any polarity between ‘myth’ or ‘mythical thinking’ on one side and ‘rationality’ or ‘rational/logical thinking’ on the other. Yet, there was indeed a radical break with traditionally dominant ways of thinking in sixth-century Ionia, and a transition to something genuinely new. This, I have claimed, was the advent of abstractly conceived theories.

This abstract theorizing was inherently a self-critical process. Within the theoretical enterprise there were from the start tensions which generated new ideas and philosophical problems. It is in this Heraclitean self-developing tension that we can recognize the forerunner of modern science and philosophy. To do so, though, we have to reject various myths about the nature of science, e.g. those that represent it as ‘organized common sense’; or as a monolithic product of pure reason; or as a producer of complete, closed theories; or as internally coherent ‘paradigms’ which remain essentially static over long periods.⁵⁴

Recognizing the early Presocratics as forerunners of science and philosophy does not give a licence for philosophical (or scientific) imperialism in their interpretation.

Many philosophers unfortunately regard the history of philosophy in an imperialistic way, as something which can or must be made the vehicle of their own philosophical thinking. It should hardly need to be said that this kind of attitude leads to the writing of bad history, based on essentially arbitrary assumptions. Philosophical imperialism is admittedly hard to avoid. To those without philosophical interests, the history of philosophy will never begin to make much sense anyway; but those who do have such interests will always be tempted to read their own philosophical assumptions back into the history. The necessary prophylactics are: detailed examination of the evidence, self-consciousness about methodology, self-criticism, a historical perspective on the activities of the human mind, and an awareness of, and openness toward, *all* traditions of philosophy and science.

Nor is it necessary to deny absolutely that there could have been ‘oriental influences’ at work in sixth-century thinking. Sixth-century Ionians had access to the culture of the ancient Near East, and then to that of the Iranian peoples, and it is not improbable that they were aware of the myths and cosmogonies current in these cultures.⁵⁵ The difficulty is to show that the awareness, supposing it existed, was of essential importance. It is not probable, if the general account is right, that Ionian theorists would passively adopt ideas current in the Near East, any more than they passively adopted traditional Greek ideas. If, for example, a particular Milesian cosmogony closely resembled a particular Near Eastern (or older Greek) one, that was presumably because the Milesian theorist found some sort of nourishment for his own intellectual project in the earlier one (though it might just be a case of what evolutionary biologists call ‘convergence’). That by itself in no way indicates that the two cosmological enterprises were of the same kind. For this reason, even close formal parallels are of doubtful value, and may well be positively misleading, when we are trying to understand what the early Ionians were about.⁵⁶

For, if the natural philosophers were indeed the first abstract theorists, they were constrained by the very nature of their own project to criticize fundamentally, and either reject or completely reinterpret, all previous cosmological ideas. It is characteristic of Ionian theorizing, as it is of science and philosophy generally, that ideas are to be accepted, or rejected, in and for themselves; their provenance is irrelevant.

NOTES

- 1 The observation goes back to Aristotle: Thales the pioneer of ‘natural philosophy’ (*Met.* 1.3, 983b20–1); but Eleatics not concerned with natural science (*Phys.* 1.2, 184b25–185a20).
- 2 On the importance of reconstructing ‘the essential unity of early Greek natural speculation’, Kahn 1960:3–6. The notes to sections 2 to 5 below do not claim to be complete as lists of evidence.
- 3 I am grateful to Anton Powell for his valuable criticisms and suggestions of improvements.
- 4 ‘All things’ or ‘the universe’ as studied by ‘natural philosophy’: Plato *Phaedrus* 269e–270c, *Sophist* 242c–243b, cf. *Laws* 10.888e–889c; Aristotle *Met.* 1.2 982b17, 1.3 983b6–11, 1.8 988b22–3. Notable earlier passages: Xenophanes B 34.2;

- Parmenides B 1.31–2, 9.3; Empedocles B 2.5; Anaxagoras B 1; Diogenes of Apollonia B 2, B 5; [Hippocrates] *Nat. Hom.* 1. See also n. 22 below. (References to Presocratic texts, throughout, use the standard system of Diels and Kranz 1956 ('Diels-Kranz').)
- 5 This is one question on which the natural interpretation of the evidence of Aristotle and the doxography has been viewed with excessive scepticism. The line of thought is reported by Aristotle *Phys.* 3.4 203b22–8, which seems to refer only to the Atomists in the first instance. The 'infinitely many worlds' attested for other Presocratics have been variously interpreted: for the state of the question, see Kirk *et al.* 1983:122–6 (on Anaximander).
 - 6 On Xenophanes and epistemological problems in the sixth and early fifth centuries, Hussey 1990. The most explicit later fifth-century evidence is in Democritus (B 6–11, 125) and [Hippocrates] *VM (On Ancient Medicine)* 1.
 - 7 This assumption is implicit in the concept of 'natural science' which Aristotle attributes to the Presocratics, and in some other of the passages cited in n. 4 above. The qualification 'as a whole' is vital: the assumption that the cosmos is *piecemeal*-intelligible is surely implicit in all cosmologies. Cf. Vernant 1983:178–80.
 - 8 Basic entities (and properties) specified: Parmenides B 8.53–61, B 9; Empedocles B 6, B 17.18–20 and 30–5; B 21.3–14; Anaxagoras B 4, B 12; Diogenes of Apollonia B 2, B 5; Democritus B 9, B 125; [Hippocrates] *Flat. (Breaths)* 2–3; *Carn. (Fleshes)* 2; *Nat. Hom. (On the Nature of Man)* 1. Cf. Plato *Sophist* 242c–243b; Aristotle (e.g.) *Physics* 1.4, 187a12–23.
 - 9 Presocratics 'indistinct', 'unclear': Aristotle *Met.* 1.7, 988a23, and 1.10, 993a13–24. Uncertainty over Anaximander: Aristotle *Phys.* 1.4, 187a20–1; Simplicius *in Phys.* 154,14–23 Diels (=Diels-Kranz 12 A 9a) (citing Theophrastus).
 - 10 As usual with Aristotle, his analysis of his predecessors' views is merged with his analysis of the problems themselves.
 - 11 There are, of course, philosophical difficulties in explicating these notions of the *economy* and *power* of explanations. They are nonetheless essential to an understanding of the nature of science. It must not be assumed, though, that the explanations were intended to meet exactly the same standards of completeness and exactness as those of modern science: see n. 17 below.
 - 12 On the possible nature of these constraints, see sec. 7.
 - 13 Cf. Vlastos 1947; and on political analogies also sec. 4.
 - 14 'Symmetry' is meant to include not just mirror-symmetry but radial symmetry and uniformity in space and time generally. On the mathematical foundations of the general notion of symmetry, and its importance in physics, see Weyl 1952, van Fraassen 1989.
 - 15 Aristotle *Cael.* 2.13, 295b11–16. Hesiod too envisages a symmetry in the position of the earth (*Theogony* 720–5), though it does not seem to do explanatory work.
 - 16 Lloyd 1966, esp. chs 4 to 6.
 - 17 On overall analogies and their uses, see Lloyd 1966: chs 4 and 6. We should not be surprised or puzzled, as Lloyd seems to be, that 'in the extant fragments of the Presocratics we repeatedly find theories and accounts of natural phenomena which appear to consist of nothing but an image or comparison' (Lloyd 1966:228–9). In the first instance, what was aimed at was not an explanation meeting modern scientific (or even Aristotelian) standards, but a plausible outline account fitting into the chosen overall framework. Still less should we conclude that the Presocratics were unaware of any distinction between the literal and the metaphorical (Padel 1992:9–10, 33–40). Of course there are deeper problems here, which this essay can

only point at. One is that of the development, Presocratic and later, from analogies to Aristotelian explanations. Another is that of the status of myths, and the question of just where the boundary between literal and metaphorical truth was thought to lie at any time. As rightly insisted by Lloyd (Lloyd 1990:14–38), the *location* of the boundary is itself a matter dictated by theory, not by some supposedly neutral ‘common sense’.

- 18 As argued by Hussey 1982.
- 19 The evidence in most cases does not allow us to see what exactly was going on in these particular analogies, on which see Lloyd 1966: ch. 5. On the relation to explanation, see the general remarks in n. 17 above.
- 20 On ‘common sense’, see n. 28.
- 21 For example, there is the perennial problem in science of the fudging of experimental data. How far, in experiment, may one ignore ‘deviant’ results which can be plausibly represented as due to experimental error?
- 22 On non-technical early usage of the word *phusis*, Holwerda 1951 is fundamental. He shows that it corresponded systematically to the uses of the verb *einai*, so that *phusis* was what supplied the answer to the question ‘what is it?’, in any sense of ‘is’. The connection with *phuomai* (‘grow’) was felt as secondary. The centrality of the notion of *phusis* (variously interpreted) in the Presocratics has often been seen: e.g. by Collingwood 1945: ch. 1; Kahn 1960:201–2, Lloyd 1979. Some early occurrences of *phusis* as *phusis* of the world/universe, and subject of inquiry: Philolaus B 1; Euripides fr. 593.2, fr. 910.5; [Hippocrates] *VM* (*On Ancient Medicine*) 20, *Carn. (Fleshes)* 15; ‘*Dissoi Logoi*’ (=Diels-Kranz 90) 8.2; Xenophon *Mem.* 1.1.11 and 14, Plato *Protagoras* 315c, *Phaedo* 96a, *Lysis* 214b4. *Phusiologos* and *phusiologia* seem not to be attested before Aristotle.
- 23 Thus interpreted, the Presocratic concept of *phusis* is closely related, of course, to the historical and medical concepts. These still need further study, but see, for a start, Weidauer 1954:32–46; on *phusis* in general also Lloyd 1991: ch. 18.
- 24 Cf. the constraints of what I have called elsewhere the principle of ‘No Extra Sensibles’ in Xenophanes and Heraclitus (Hussey 1982:35, 38; Hussey 1990:26 and n. 40).
- 25 Anaxagoras’ Mind is taken to be not merely analogous to but actually constitutive of human minds (see the discussion of Schofield 1980:10–22); so its operations are directly observable by human beings.
- 26 This enrichment was presumably then, in turn, used in conjunction with a *theoretical* claim that even ‘ordinary’ water actually had these properties: cf. sec. 6.
- 27 For example: Thuc. 5.105.2; Aristophanes *Clouds* 1075; Euripides *Troades* 886; Xenophon *Mem.* 1.1.11 and 15, Plato *Laws* 10.889b–890a; Aristotle *Physics* 2.8, 198b10–16. Cf. Leucippus B 2.
- 28 On ‘common sense’ in Presocratic theorizing, see Kirk 1961; Lloyd 1991, ch. 5.
- 29 Hippocrates *Nat. Hom.* 1, Xen. *Mem.* 1.1.14, Plato *Sophist* 242c–243b; Aristotle *Met.* 1.3, 983b6–984a16; *Met.* 7.1, 1028b2–6.
- 30 Heraclitus perhaps tried to extend it in this way: see Hussey 1982.
- 31 The best survey is still that of Beare 1906.
- 32 Even some varieties of option (3), in particular the Atomists’ affirmation of mortal gods made of atoms, may have been generally considered to amount to atheism and/or blasphemy. The evidence denoting specific people (Prodikos, Diagoras) as atheists is not contemporary, but derives from an Epicurean source: see Henrichs 1975. Generally sceptical or atheistic attitudes in the late fifth century are attested by: Protagoras B 4; Euripides frs. 286, 913; Aristophanes *Eq.* 32–5, *Clouds* 247–8, *Thesm.* 451–2.

- 33 Some important texts are: Anaxagoras, B 12, 13, 14; Diogenes of Apollonia B 2, 3, 4, 5; Euripides frs. 593 (=Kritias B 19 Diels-Kranz), 877, 941; Aristophanes *Clouds*, where this option is sometimes merged in and sometimes distinct from atheism, *Frogs* 888–93; Xenophon *Mem.* 4.7.6–7; Hippocrates *Morb. Sacr. (On the Sacred Disease)*, *Carn. (Fleshes)*; Plato *Apology* 26c–e, *Laws* 886d–e, 966e–967b. See in general Burkert 1985:317–21.
- 34 In recent English-language scholarship, there is a noticeable tendency to be hyper-sceptical about the Aristotelian evidence (e.g. Barnes 1979, Kirk *et al.* 1983), or even to ignore the problem altogether (Furley 1987). Outlines of a more balanced view (and one having more regard to the principles of evidence) are to be seen in Lloyd 1991:100–4.
- 35 The justification of this reconstruction, and of its attribution to the Milesians, cannot be attempted here. The post-Aristotelian doxographic reports about the Milesians' theology are almost certainly worthless. We have to start from Aristotle: *De An.* 411a7–8, cf. Plato *Laws* 899b (Thales said that 'all things are full of gods'); *Phys.* III 4, 203b3–15 (Anaximander and 'most of the natural philosophers' identified 'the divine' with what was infinite and 'steered everything'). There are supplementary arguments relating to particular philosophers.
- 36 The assertion of an *overall* teleology of this kind must be sharply distinguished from the assertion of a divine providence directly involved in the planning of *particular* features of the world; on the latter see Parker 1992.
- 37 This was seen by Jaeger 1947. We need not accept the speculative elaborations on this point by Jaeger himself or e.g. by Vernant 1983: ch. 15. Nor is it thereby implied that Milesian theorizing was substantially continuous with any *earlier* theology; the arguments of e.g. Cornford and Hölscher to that effect are misconceived (cf. on 'oriental influences' in sec. 8). Nor does it imply that Milesian theorising was *a priori*, or *dictated* by theological or teleological considerations.
- 38 This shows why it is not advisable to use the concept of *matter*; or the term 'hylozoism' defined in terms of *matter*; in explicating Ionian theories. Not only did they have no word corresponding to 'matter', but, if their theories were as described, they *could* not (until the Atomists) have admitted a corresponding concept.
- 39 For translations of some ancient Near Eastern cosmologies, see Pritchard 1969, Dalley 1989.
- 40 On ancient Near Eastern mathematics and astronomy see Neugebauer 1962.
- 41 The advent of literacy in Greece, which made it possible to preserve complex thinking, was presumably another external factor. On this see Lloyd 1987:70–8 and Lloyd 1991: ch. 6.
- 42 The monotheism of the Egyptian king Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV), and of some parts of the Old Testament.
- 43 Another way of putting it is that it is a conscious recognition of the notion of *essence*. The beginnings of abstraction are perhaps seen in the 'personifications' which appear in Hesiod and already in ancient Near Eastern myth.
- 44 For *abstraction* as a distinguishing characteristic of Presocratic thought, cf. Snell 1953: ch. 9; Vernant 1983:348. One may perhaps also compare Heidegger's insistence that 'Philosophy did not spring from myth. It arises solely from thinking and in thinking. But thinking is the thinking of Being' (Heidegger 1984:40).
- 45 Self-awareness: the point is made by Snell 1953:213; cf. e.g. Popper 1969:407 ('the conscious critical debate of science'); Lloyd 1990:28–34.

- 46 'Rationality' as characteristic of Presocratics: (e.g.) Cornford 1952:187; Snell 1953:223; Kahn 1960:7; Barnes 1979:4; Williams 1981:218; Kirk *et al.* 1983:7, 72–3; Vernant 1983: ch. 15. For recent philosophical debates about 'rationality', see the essays in the collections of Wilson 1974, and of Hollis and Lukes 1982.
- 47 For style and content, besides the Presocratic fragments themselves, and Hippocratic writings, the discussions by Herodotus of geographical questions and of the Nile flood may be compared. For the public image of the natural philosophers, evidence in Euripides, Aristophanes (esp. *Clouds*), Xenophon and Plato can be used, but with caution. On the whole subject, see Lloyd 1979 and Lloyd 1987; cf. also Schofield 1980: ch. 1 (on Anaxagoras).
- 48 Cf. Fränkel 1975:257–8 (and n. 9). The philosophical poems of Parmenides and Empedocles, and perhaps some of the writings of Demokritos, probably would have been intended for restricted audiences from the start. Likewise there are some writings in the Hippocratic corpus which are clearly collections of material not intended for publication.
- 49 In descriptions of their activity in Presocratic and Hippocratic sources, the notions of 'searching' (*dizesthai*, *zetein*), 'inquiring' (*historein*) and 'discovering, finding out' (*heur(isk)ein*, *punthanein*) are prominent. On the other side, critics saw the natural philosophers (or those they happened to disagree with) as mad, deluded, over-confident, over-ambitious: Parmenides B 7, B 8.38–41, B 8.52–3; Pindar fr. 209 Snell ('they pluck the fruit of wisdom when it is unripe'); Empedocles B 2; Herodotus 2.20, 4.36.2; Aristophanes *Clouds*; Xenophon 1.1.11–15 (reporting Socrates). The word *meteorlogia* sometimes used to describe their activities has contemptuous as well as admiring overtones. On 'egotism' see Lloyd 1987:56–70.
- 50 On the 'philosophical' side of the Milesians, Jordan 1990:8–19 has interesting suggestions.
- 51 The cumulative development of a corpus of theory about particular physical mechanisms is made likely, but hardly demonstrable, by the scanty evidence. See generally the admirable treatment in Sambursky 1956. On the lack of systematic experimentation, see Lloyd 1991, ch. 4.
- 52 Herodotus 2.20–7. The earlier polemics of Xenophanes, Heraclitus and Parmenides can also hardly have been made in a controversial vacuum. Cf. Lloyd 1991:115–16.
- 53 See also the remarks in sec. 6. Aristotle's treatment of the Presocratics needs a thorough re-examination; the study by Cherniss (1964) lacks understanding of Aristotelian physics and dialectic.
- 54 Misunderstandings about the nature of science underlie, for example, the otherwise ingenious and interesting work of F.M.Cornford, and the debate between Popper and Kirk (see Popper 1969: ch. 5; Kirk 1970, and retrospectively Lloyd 1991: ch. 5). For recent forthright and accessible criticism of philosophers' myths about science by a practising scientist, see Wolpert 1992. The best antidote to such myths, if one is not oneself a scientist, is to read a good history of science by someone who is: e.g. Sambursky 1956 on ancient Greek science, or Pais 1986 on twentieth-century physics.
- 55 On the historical background, Boardman 1980. Attempts to demonstrate non-Greek intellectual influences have often been made, in recent years notably by Burkert 1963; Hölscher 1968:43–77 (on Anaximander); and West 1971. There are valuable cautionary words in Kahn 1979:297–302. On the whole subject see now Lloyd 1991: ch. 12.
- 56 Hölscher 1968:69, 80–2 shows some understanding of this point. He sees myth (Hesiodic and Near Eastern) as presenting an intellectual challenge, the response

to which was Ionian theorizing. The story is intelligible, but does not pinpoint the essential difference, nor gauge the full extent of the revolution in thought, nor explain why the scientific response did not come earlier or elsewhere. The elaborate attempt of Cornford (Cornford 1952) to show that Ionian cosmology was ‘not scientific’, and was dependent on Hesiod, is flawed by failure to see these points, and generally by lack of understanding of science: see Vlastos 1955.

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LAW AND SOCIETY IN
THUCYDIDES

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The study of Greek law (which effectively means Athenian law of the classical period) has not been pursued with the diligence that characterizes the study of Roman law. The attention given to the latter is due perhaps to the continued employment of *ius civile* in western European countries and also to the handy codifications of Roman law provided by Theodosius II and Justinian. By contrast the very idea that there was something that might be called 'Greek law' is one that has been fiercely debated and it is symptomatic of this state of affairs that the best known of the Greek legal systems, the Athenian, has often been approached through categories and definitions that are far more suited to the law of Rome.¹ The lack of attention to real law has been balanced by extensive modern researches into Greek terms like *nomos* ('law'/'custom') and *dike* ('justice').² There is in particular a large body of work on the fifth-century sophistic debate between *nomos* and *phusis* ('nature'), the so-called nurture-nature debate.³ Work in these areas is of course of vital importance for gaining an understanding of the Athenians' idea of law and justice. But it does not reveal much about how the people of Athens were seen to respond to statute law's prescription of codes of behaviour and social conduct in real life. A much better resource is offered by the classic Athenian orators, a corpus of writing fundamental to any work on Athenian society and consequently one well exploited by researchers. The orators, however, tended to be concerned with particular situations and limited groups. They did not survey general attitudes towards law as a whole, or comment seriously on whether law was really a good thing, and why the laws were broken. Further, the orators are mainly restricted to the fourth century and do not offer sufficient evidence for the crucial period of the Peloponnesian War. This is also true of philosophical texts which comment on law (mainly, of course, those of Plato and Aristotle), with the exception of Antiphon (*On Truth*). Additionally, these texts are necessarily theoretical and unhistorical. It is thus surprising that one text of the late fifth century which does examine particular historical cases and also reflects generally on attitudes towards control and deviance, the *History* of Thucydides, has not been examined from the perspective of law. The reason it has not is in part because many historians often read Thucydides only as a source for the history of the Athenian empire (and he says virtually nothing on Athenian courts as such), while literary studies naturally restrict

themselves to the examination of themes and motifs which, where touching on law, consider it mainly in the light of the sophistic debate on *nomos* and *phusis* and/or Thucydides' supposedly moralist or immoralist outlook. In what follows the reading of Thucydides is also 'literary' in the sense that it is confined to the *History*. But this will not be another attempt to discover a new way of approaching the *History* as 'text'. The focus will be on Thucydides' opinions as an historian and an observer of the operation of law in society at the level of the individual and of the community, and on his interest in the failure of law and in the causes of that failure.

One of the things that makes Thucydides' *History* compelling is the tension between the subject of the narrative, the Peloponnesian War, which focuses on dispersions and ruptures in Greek society,⁴ and the historian's insistence on the predictability and stability of human behaviour. In other words, loss and impermanence, relating to the particular events around which the *History* is built, are balanced by a belief in unity and conformity, which operate at a general level away from particularities. Thucydides does not simply draw general lessons from his story, as many authors do. For he identifies a mechanism of formation and transformation in history—human nature—which will allow readers of his work to estimate how events will proceed on the general level. Thucydides' ideas here owe much to contemporary medical belief in the possibility of predicting the course of diseases by assuming an essential constancy in their natures. The Hippocratic writers refer to this as 'prognosis'. Thucydides' innovation was to apply the idea to the realm of human conduct, which was largely ignored by the medical texts. Medicine, a well-established discourse by Thucydides' time, offers a wider parallel to the *History* in that it too charts particular disruptions and disjunctures and at the same time asserts the existence of wholeness and continuity which can be restored to the sick through its care. Law has important points of contact here. By Thucydides' time it also was a well established discourse. Although there is no jurisprudence contemporary with the medical theorists and we cannot speak of law as a *techne* ('art' or 'skill'), as we can with medicine, law does have a recognizable internal coherence and a stability which is seen not so much in the surface expression of particular texts or documents but in the underlying way in which law organizes its interests and presents itself, like medicine, as a correct forum for discussing what is good for men.⁵ As discourses both medicine and law had (and continue to have) strong cultural affinities in terms of their tight control over their spheres of influence, their unwillingness to be proved wrong, and their ability to convert error into triumphs of progress. Both had distinctive institutional sites (the *ietreion*, 'surgery', the *dikasterion*, 'court') where the patient or criminal was examined. The wide-ranging senses of *nomos* within the normative field from statute law to custom to socially agreed usage made law a ready-made system for determining and prescribing the form of human conduct. For Thucydides, who is consistently interested in how men behave toward one another, it was natural to consider the claim law makes to stabilize human nature and the obstacles that human nature puts in its way, especially as law was, and was seen to be by the historian, of great ideological significance to the Athenian democracy.

In Thucydides' text domination, control, and order, and opposition, reaction, and breakdown are frequently explored as typical human responses in speeches and authorial comments. In these rules and rule-breaking are frequently examined implicitly

or explicitly. This interest has a bearing on Thucydides' presentation of human nature, especially with regard to the bad side of man which is so evident in his work. By examining his interest in the operation of social restraints and in the factors which undermine these and lead individuals and communities to break them, we will be in a position to say something on why in his view the bad side of man manifests itself. It will also be possible to argue that Thucydides believed that most people in fact conform to rules (in other words, that human nature is not inevitably bad), that rules are necessary for social stability, even if prone to break down, and, importantly, that similar motives behind rule-breaking and the failure of restraints can be identified for both states and individuals. There are two important discussions in the *History* of the nature of controls, restraints, and resistance. One is an intrinsic part of the analysis of the Kerkyrean *stasis* ('revolution'/'factional fighting') in Book Three; the other is imbedded in the speech of Diodotos in the Mytilene debate, also in Book Three. Thucydides' basic opinions on the place of law in the community emerge clearly from the *stasis* discussion. The remarks ascribed to Diodotos cannot, since they are in a speech, be taken to represent Thucydides' own views except insofar as they clarify or amplify what is already understood from his authorial comment on events in Kerkyra. Important authorial observations on law are also found in the description of Athenian society during the plague in Book Two.

I start with Kerkyra (iii.82–3).⁶ In analysing the events of the *stasis* Thucydides must focus on what happened to law, since an important way in which the life of the city was disrupted was through the collapse of *nomos*.⁷ The *stasis* affected and undermined *nomoi* in the sense of unwritten and written (statute) laws. Thucydides stresses at the beginning of the analysis (iii.82.1) the personal hostility of the faction leaders and their willingness to call in Athens or Sparta to do the other side harm. The idea of vengeance is brought out strongly throughout iii.82.⁸ This is natural in a chapter with a strong focus on lawbreaking, since this way of resolving disputes was firmly rooted in archaic Greek thought before the ascendancy of law.⁹ Law as a discourse runs naturally in tandem with other discourses about cohesion. Hence the focus at iii.82.6 on the failure of the restraints of kinship. Thucydides says that traditional modes of cohesion were replaced during the *stasis* by *xunodoi*, 'associations', based on *pleonexia* ('greed') 'not for the sake of mutual aid under the established laws [*ton keimenon nomon*], but in violation of the statutes [*para tons kathestotas*] for greed'.¹⁰ The oaths of the conspirators were secured 'not by divine law but rather...by lawbreaking in common'. The ignoring of oaths and general legal sanctions is stressed again in the remaining sections (82.7–8). In their bid to achieve power through *pleonexia* and *philotimia* ('ambition') the various groupings were prepared to exceed 'the just' (*to dikaion*) and ultimately to indulge in actual or judicial murder (§8 'an unjust sentence of condemnation'). In iii.82 Thucydides assembles the facts about the breaking of *nomoi* during the revolution. His analysis in the next chapter (83) concentrates on two aspects of this process of *kakotropia*, as he puts it (literally 'badness of habits'). One is the triumph of stupidity over sense. The other is the repudiation of what he calls *to euethes*: 'simplicity, which is the greatest part of noble character [*to gennaion*], was laughed to scorn and disappeared' (iii.83.1).¹¹ The absence of *gennaiotes* ('nobility of character') in inter-faction relations has already been noted (82.7).

Thucydides' comments about the failure of rules suggest that the trust and intelligence which are the basic constituents of social solidarity are mediated to society by properly constituted statute and customary *nomoi*. Once these have gone, the basic values disappear and society quickly collapses. In iii.82–3 he explicitly generalizes from the specific happenings on Kerkyra. 'Many difficulties fell on the cities in time of revolution, exist now, and always will be, as long as human nature is the same. These were greater or more mild and distinctive in their forms according to the changes of circumstances in each particular case. For in time of peace and prosperity communities and individuals have better intentions because they do not face necessities outside their control; whereas war which interrupts the supply of what they need to live on each day is a violent teacher and assimilates the emotions of most to their circumstances' (iii.82.2). *Stasis* and its effects are a problem of wartime rather than peace, when the factional leaders would not have had the opportunity or 'excuse' (*prophasis*) to call in outside backers (iii.82.1). But the patterns of behaviour which are evidenced during revolution are clearly conceived of as revealing what is a natural side of man ('as long as human nature is the same') and of being brought out by the circumstances which one is in. It should also be noted that cities are held to be affected by changes of circumstances just as much as individuals. Although Thucydides often distinguishes between the aims of individuals and groups (especially by contrasting the words *hekastos*, 'each', with *xumpantes*, 'all'),¹² at iii.82 and elsewhere the city and its people are viewed from the outside and treated as if they were one and the same.¹³ Another important point to note from iii.82–3 is how social collapse and the disappearance of the crucial quality of *to euethes* happen alongside the triumph of stupidity over intelligence. 'Those who were inferior in judgement generally prevailed' and overcame those who possessed *to xuneton* ['intelligence'] through bold and aggressive action (83.3). This is surely something Thucydides did not approve of. Earlier in Book Three Kleon, to whom the historian is hostile,¹⁴ is made to assert in similar language that 'for the most part those who are inferior govern the cities better than those who are more intelligent' and they 'generally succeed' (37.3, 5). Since Kleon characterizes this type of government as a combination of *amathia* ('ignorance') and *sophrosune* ('temperance') (37.4), he is presumably baiting his Athenian listeners with the familiar stability of Sparta.¹⁵ While Thucydides certainly recognized the success of *sophrosune* at Sparta (viii.24.4), the analysis of the *stasis* at Kerkyra plainly shows that he did not recognize the triumph of ignorance as any sort of success at all. He draws a clear link between intelligent government and government by law. As we shall see, education and adherence to law are portrayed by Thucydides in the Funeral Speech in Book Two as crucial aspects of the idealized Athenian democracy in contrast with criminality and ignorance.

It is now time to bring in the comments of Diodotos at iii.45 which he makes in the course of the debate on the punishment of the rebellious community of Mytilene. In iii.82–3 Thucydides describes widespread rejection of lawful behaviour during *stasis*. 'The cause of all this was power motivated by greed and ambition' (iii.82.8). The elite is blamed here for showing the majority the way. In contrast to this Diodotos at iii.45 is concerned with the causes of both elite and popular lawbreaking and he dwells especially on the ineffectiveness of law when it is confronted by determined

lawbreakers. We will have to consider the differences between the two passages carefully, and in particular the extent to which Diodotos' words can be used to amplify Thucydides' own. The assertion made in iii.45 is that any belief in the sacrosanctity of law is overly simple. This is consistent with Diodotos' aim of countering the demand of his antagonist in the debate, Kleon, that the Athenians should uphold their original decision to put to death the adult males of Mytilene because of the city's rebellion against Athens. Kleon had argued that such punishment would be a 'clear example to whoever rebels' (iii.40.7).¹⁶ In his reply (iii.42–8) Diodotos counters by saying that Athenian interests lie not in seeing the matter in purely judicial terms as Kleon had done, but in ensuring the future usefulness and revenue-producing capacity of Mytilene and other states that might rebel (iii.44, 46–8). He suggests in particular in iii.45 (cf. iii.46.4) that judicial restraints are totally ineffective. Here Diodotos casts a different overall perspective on attitudes towards law than Thucydides does later in his authorial comments on revolution. Nevertheless, much of what he says about why law fails is directly compatible with Thucydides' remarks on lawbreaking at iii.82–3 and also with Thucydides' observations and comments on lawlessness at Athens during the plague in Book ii.52–3. In iii.45 Diodotos focuses primarily on written laws,¹⁷ but he does not refer only to specific crimes and punishments and talks also generally about rules and rule-breaking by both states and by individuals. His remarks constitute the first disquisition in history on the problems and nature of criminality.¹⁸ His main single point is that the death penalty is no deterrent to great crimes. The overall context of the remarks is the behaviour of states towards one another (Mytilene and Athens), but it is quickly made clear that individuals are thought of as being under similar motivation to do wrong (§3 'all men are naturally inclined to do wrong in private and in public'). The linking of cities and individuals, which is made explicitly in §6, is made often also by Thucydides, as we have seen.¹⁹ Diodotos suggests that there is no *nomos* which will stop criminal acts, 'since men have already gone through the whole range of punishments making them more severe, in the hope that less crime might be committed by criminals [*kakourgoi*].' *Kakourgoi* are the subject of Diodotos' disquisition. Despite the apparent implication of §3 ('all are naturally inclined', etc.), they are presented as a separate group from the majority of men who have long been trying to contain them. The identification or labelling of a distinct group such as *kakourgoi* is a necessary step for anyone arguing a retributivist case for justice, for put simply the 'criminal' must be identified before he can be punished.²⁰ But Diodotos, having labelled his man, is not so much interested in questions of distribution ('who is to be punished?') as rather in the development and justification of penalties and in the causes of criminal action. He reasons (§3 'it is probable') that in the past the greatest crimes had milder penalties than now, but as transgression continued many attracted the death sentence, and yet transgression still goes on. He then offers reasons for crime. 'Poverty [*penia*] by its pressure producing recklessness, power [*exousia*] through insolence and pride producing greed for more [*pleonexia*], and other conditions of life [*allai xuntukbiai*], lead men into undertaking risks [*kindunoi*], as they are held fast now by one now by another of these conditions, through some human passion, under the influence of an overmastering feeling' (§4).²¹ Diodotos then discusses the role of hope, 'love',²² and fortune in 'leading men on to *kinduneuein* [undertake risks]' (§5–6), and he

again emphasizes the link between individuals and cities (§6).²³ He ends by dismissing the possibility of using *nomos* as an effective instrument of stopping ‘human nature when it is wholeheartedly set on doing something’ (§7).

Consider now the rather different approach to law and order that is ascribed to Pericles in the idealization of Athens in the Funeral Speech in Book Two. Here, as part of the eulogy of those killed in the first year of the War, Pericles is made to outline the culturally prescribed goals and the methods of gaining them in current Athenian society. First and foremost in the praise of the city is a sketch of the means of making social progress, that is, universal opportunity in tandem with universal desire of participation in the democracy combined with an equal access to the law (ii.37). Following this Pericles confirms Athens’ cultural, military, and intellectual pre-eminence (38–41), in pursuit of which men will give up their lives, distracted by neither poverty nor wealth (42–3). In the picture drawn in the Funeral Speech the needs of the democracy as a system are successfully absorbed by individual citizens and reproduce themselves faithfully at all times. Thucydides’ Pericles adopts a holistic approach to society in which all the pieces fit together neatly and, once fixed, stay fixed. Law is an important part of the democratic process (37.1). ‘All men share equality [*to ison*] according to the laws with regard to their private disputes ...[§3] In public life we do not break the law chiefly through fear, by obedience both to those who are always in office and to the laws, and especially those of them which are enacted for the benefit of people who are wronged.’²⁴ What of lawbreaking? It is mentioned by implication, but treated only as a submarginal phenomenon within the system. Indeed, criminality is an exception which serves only to reinforce the rules, for in Pericles’ reading the existence of violations of the law is cleverly hidden under the possibility of redress for victims (37.3 ‘those of [the laws] which are enacted for the benefit of people who are wronged’).²⁵ In writing the Funeral Speech Thucydides no doubt had various aims. One of these must surely have been to provide through the character of Pericles whom he admired so much an ideal portrait of Periclean Athens. But only extreme literalists would deny that the picture of Athens in the Funeral Speech is not at least questioned by Thucydides as an author and as an historian in his juxtaposition of the speech with the narrative of the plague in which Athens is so different and non-ideal.²⁶ Indeed, the whole sequence of Funeral Speech, plague, final speech of Pericles, death of Pericles and Thucydides’ disparagement of his successors, is one where the text is under tight authorial control. With regard specifically to the ideal comments in the Funeral Speech about law, Thucydides’ analysis of social fragility at iii.82–3 certainly shows that the holistic approach attributed to Pericles is not his own. For Thucydides there are competing and destructive social forces and visions in each and every society. If the circumstances are right, these competing forces are unleashed. The phenomenon of rule-breaking, of crime, is precisely an expression of this.

Let us return to Diodotos’ remarks at iii.45.5. What is the position he adopts? Diodotos goes into great detail concerning the reasons for criminal activity. Rule-breaking is seen by him quite clearly as what criminologists call ‘deviation’, that is, ‘banned or controlled behaviour...likely to attract punishment or disapproval’, by which people ‘make their lives rather more hazardous and problematic’.²⁷ For

Diodotos' criminals 'take risks' (*kinduneuousei*) through 'hope' of success or through 'poverty...power...and other conditions of life' (iii.45.1, 4, 6). We have in part what might now be called a sort of 'anomie' theory, that is, where the propensity to crime seems to be routine and built into the system (and so quite different from Pericles' picture). For Diodotos crime depends on the existence of a gulf between the prescribed goals and the institutionally available means, that is, the goal of not being poor,²⁸ and, if one already has wealth, the aim of getting more (*pleonexia*). Diodotos also identifies as a reason for crime the sheer intensity of the individual's motivation and will ('love', 'hope'). He focuses too on the question of control: 'it is frankly impossible and a sign of great simplicity for a man to think that there is any way of averting human nature by the strength of law or by some other terror when it is wholeheartedly set on doing something' (§7). But it is important to note that, when he here suggests that there is no commitment to the rules at all, the context is still *kakourgoi* ('criminals'), as in the rest of the chapter, and there is nothing to suggest in his remarks that most people are desocialized and at all times ready to break the law.²⁹

That Thucydides shares Diodotos' description of the existence of a certain routine level of crime in the system (as opposed to the views ascribed to Pericles) emerges from his account of the great plague at Athens where crime expands from the private into the public sphere (ii.52–3). Here economic factors due to the war are given some stress in accounting for desocialized behaviour, as one would expect (ii.52.1; cf. iii.82.2). But Thucydides dwells principally upon the social problems caused by the disease. In ii.52.3–4 disregard of religion is stressed, especially with reference to the laws and customs of burial: 'all the laws concerning funerals were thrown into confusion'. (We are perhaps supposed to be reminded of the careful description of the state funeral ceremony at ii.34.) He then describes in ii.53 the general effect on Athens' mental stability. The picture he draws is nothing short of the tragic. 'For the first time [*proton*] in other areas too the plague marked the beginning of a more general lawlessness [*epi pleon anomias*] in the city' (53.1). He goes on rhetorically to outline a complete breakdown in law and order. His comments must represent an exaggeration. Indeed, the piling on of details which we see in the whole of the plague narrative can be viewed as a literary technique familiar from Homer onwards, which serves to highlight suffering at the expense of normality. Thucydides' plague is apocalyptic—'its form was beyond reasoning' and 'its affliction was more difficult than human nature could bear'.³⁰ The implication that lawlessness survived the pestilence (cf. 'for the first time') was challenged by Gomme.³¹ And it is true that, even if Thucydides is taken as looking forward to the later incidents of the Hermae, the Athenian Revolution, and the troubles at the end of the war, the exaggeration of social breakdown during the plague cannot be excused historically. Nevertheless, at the base of these comments are Thucydides' observations. They can be taken as representing his view (or one of his views) of Athens in this period. They reveal a quite different understanding from the idealized Periclean portrait. Thucydides suggests that public *anomia* now became widespread. One of the aspects of this lawlessness, which arose chiefly because people had no expectation of living long enough to come to trial (§4 'a greater sentence had already been passed and was hanging over them'), was that 'they were more

willing to dare to do things, their pleasure in which they had previously concealed' (§1). Here Thucydides plainly starts with the idea that there is a certain amount of deviance already (cf. *epi pleon*), much, but not all (cf. 'more willing' [*raon gar*]), of it previously hidden at home.³² This is at variance with Pericles' vision of law as an integral part of Athenian democracy and liberty in public and in private to which all citizens happily subscribe. The view given to Pericles is in fact echoed by the orators, something which is a clear example of the operation of law as discourse and of the crucial assumption that the law is correct and has an inbuilt excellence that guarantees, as Demosthenes puts it (xxiv *Timocrates* 5), 'the city's prosperity, democracy, and liberty'.³³ Speaking in the democratic courts of Athens the orators could say nothing else. Thucydides' importance to the historian of Athens and of Athenian law is, that while he, like the orators, fully understands the discourse of the law, he can also put himself at a distance from it and can see the law of Athens from a more critical perspective.

Thucydides, then, assumes like his speaker Diodotos the existence of a certain routine criminality in society. What of the motives which cause crime? In the analysis of the *stasis* Thucydides makes his remarks on lawbreaking in the context of what happens in wartime, whereas Diodotos blurs the distinction between the actions of individuals in peace and of states during war. Nevertheless, Thucydides attributes a similar motivation to rule-breakers to that proposed by Diodotos and similarly restricts their numbers within society. He observes that the wide-scale criminality of the factions during revolution is in fact accompanied by an appeal to the rules and he lists ways in which members of the various parties excused and justified their behaviour (iii.82.4): 'they exchanged the usual values of words with reference to deeds in order to justify what they were doing. It was acceptable to call reckless daring courage in defence of the party, prudent delay specious cowardice, the moderate an excuse for the timid, and overall understanding overall inaction, etc.'³⁴ Control theories in modern criminology focus on why some people do not commit crime, on what holds them back. They assume, as Diodotos does, that among criminals there is no willingness to conform to the rules nor any interest in abiding by them. But at iii.82 Thucydides' comments concern not just criminals but whole societies. It is crucial that in the sentence about the dysfunction of language the prominently placed *dikaiosis*, 'justification', is the aim of those—the majority of the citizens—who in time of revolution will break the rules.³⁵ In other words, Thucydides like Diodotos does not think of most people (or states) as automatic rule-breakers. It is strongly implied that under normal conditions most have a commitment to the rules. Like Diodotos he points to particular factors which dispose some to wrongdoing. The fundamental cause of *stasis* is political rivalry (iii.82.1) on the part of the élite for reasons of greed (82.8). According to Diodotos élite power is in itself a reason for making higher criminal demands. Thucydides agrees. At iii.82.8 the cause (*aition*) of the breakdown of society during *stasis* is the quest for 'power through greed and ambition' by 'the leaders in the cities'. There are a number of other passages which identify individuals' love of power as a cause of rule-breaking.³⁶ It is the propensity of the élite to break rules that is stressed. The extent to which *stasis* then develops among the population at large (in quality and in quantity) is in accordance with 'variations of circumstances [*xuntukbiai*]' (82.2). The words following *xuntukbiai* in iii.82 strongly suggest that

Thucydides is thinking mainly, though not exclusively, of economic determinants as the fundamental variants.³⁷ It is these changes, brought about by the war, that will lead most into crime. Diodotos says something similar with regard to *kakourgoi* (though for him there is anyway in addition to dispositional factors a lack of commitment by criminals to the rules), for in iii.45 the pressures of poverty produce recklessness and the pride and insolence of power produce greed for more. These together with ‘the *allai xuntukbiai* lead men into *kindunoi* [dangerous/deviant behaviour]’ (iii.45.4). It may be noted that this is the only other example of *xuntukbia* in the plural in the *History*. As in iii.82 it seems again to refer mostly to economic factors (poverty, greed) rather than having a vaguer meaning of ‘chance’ or ‘opportunity’.³⁸

Thucydides’ comments at iii.82–3 refer both to individuals and to communities. Diodotos focuses on the one hand on individuals who are criminals (*kakourgoi*) and on the other on the wrongdoing of states. The position attributed to him, that criminals have no commitment to the laws, would, if it is supposed to apply also to all communities, be inconsistent with what Thucydides himself says at iii.82.2, where larger groupings are, like individuals, under favourable circumstances committed to rules. If an inconsistency of this sort is suggested by Diodotos’ words at iii.45, it is resolved by what he says in iii.47, where he asserts that only some of the Mytileneans (the élite) were malefactors against Athens. Here again criminal inclination is restricted to a few members of society. Having already identified his criminal in society, Diodotos does not have to admit the possibility of a state whose members are all wrongdoers. He can thus reject Kleon’s demands that punishment should be applied to all the Mytileneans and that it should be equivalent to their crime,³⁹ demands which depend on the assumption voiced by Pericles about Athens that the citizens all have equal access to power and hence bear equal responsibility.⁴⁰ Diodotos rather distinguishes between the *demos* and the *dunatoi* and asserts that in the particular case of Mytilene the *demos* was not guilty. The account of the revolt of Mytilene given in Thucydides’ narrative tends in fact to support Kleon’s assertion that the Mytilenean *demos* was implicated in the rebellion.⁴¹ Diodotos, however, reminds his audience that ‘the *demos* in all the cities is well disposed to you and either does not join with the few in revolts or, if it is forced to, is hostile from the beginning to those who have rebelled’ (47.2). Therefore, if the *demos* is punished, its punishment will play into the hands of the oligarchs by ensuring that in future the people will voluntarily side with them, ‘since you have set a precedent of prescribing the same penalty for those who are guilty and for those who are not’ (47.3). Here one cannot say that Thucydides agrees with Diodotos factually; but there is at least a close correspondence in their approach to élite responsibility for certain types of crime. One may suggest that, if the élite in the pages of the *History* are more ready to break the rules, this is simply recognition of the fact that they have greater opportunity.⁴²

The important differences of context between Thucydides’ and Diodotos’ remarks on crime and social breakdown should not obscure the fact that what Diodotos says does by and large reinforce and clarify Thucydides’ position in his comments on the *stasis*.⁴³ What bearing do these sets of comments have on Thucydides’ understanding of *anthropeia phusis*, ‘human nature’? It is certainly the case that

anthropeia phusis is mentioned by Thucydides in authorial comments as a force in history in contexts where breakdown in society (ii.50.1; iii.82.2) is analysed or where the serious events of the war as a whole are stressed (i.22.4). He thus seems to think of the constancy that human nature gives to history in terms only of bad behaviour repeated in war or revolution. But it emerges from a comparison of Thucydides' and Diodotos' remarks that, though human nature will indulge in lawless, selfish behaviour, it does so for most people precisely in times of great pressure and stress. It seems that there are only some who are always inclined to break the rules. These may be from the mass or from the elite and the consequences of their actions will differ according to their existing positions. But for most people rules are quite acceptable. Even in the case of mass transgression, as in *stasis*, rules of some sort are preserved. In this sense rules are not only important but also a natural way of living for most people. It is very probably the case that Thucydides did not suppose human nature is generally or necessarily bad; he points rather to the power of dispositional factors as a cause of bad actions. Given these factors human nature responds mechanically and it is on this basis that Thucydides speaks of it as a constant in war and other times of stress.⁴⁴

This conclusion has some bearing on the question of whether Thucydides was an 'immoralist'. In many of the speeches of Athenians and others in the *History* the speakers ignore ethical and legal considerations of restraint and stress instead that their superior power enables them to behave as they like.⁴⁵ The talk here is of expediency, self-interest, and utility, at the expense of what is just. Although Thucydides allows this view to be expressed and very likely thought that it really was expressed at least by his Athenian politician speakers,⁴⁶ there is nothing to suggest that it was his own view and that we should place him also in the 'immoralist' camp.⁴⁷ To be sure, it is impossible to find anything in the way of corroboration that is not in the speeches. Rather, we can surely say that Thucydides believed *nomos*—law and custom—is a necessary addition to basic human nature and that only in so far as human nature is constructed by rules is there society. Thucydidean authorial comments are so few that it is not easy to gauge accurately his attitude to a faith based on the possibility of using naked unbounded power. But his comments on, for example, the Mykalessos episode, though they focus on the victim only, are sufficiently broad and the stress on 'grieving' sufficiently authorial to read into them a genuine disgust and repudiation of total disregard of rules.⁴⁸

A pertinent example to consider which reinforces this interpretation is the trial scene between the surrendered and powerless Plataians and the Thebans and their backers, the all-powerful Spartans, at iii.52–68. Here Thucydides' contempt for abuses of power is tied in closely to his interest in law. The Plataians surrender on the basis that 'they should accept the Lacedaemonians as judges [*dikastai*], who would punish wrongdoers, but no one contrary to justice [*para diken*]' (iii.52.2). This echoes the advice given to the Athenians by Diodotos shortly before about what should be done with the Mytileneans (iii.48.1 'try the guilty at your leisure, let the others dwell in peace'). Now at Plataia, when Lacedaemonian dicasts arrive to hear the case, they put one question: 'had they [the Plataians] done anything good to the Lacedaemonians or their allies during the present war?' The Plataians ask for leave to say more and their representatives begin their speech by saying, 'When surrendering our city,

Lacedaemonians, we had our trust in you, and we did not think we would have to undergo a trial [*dike*] like this, but one of a more legal kind [*nomimoteran*] (53.1). Later in this Book Thucydides mentions again the use of show-trials at Kerkyra (70.3–6, 81.2). The Plataian-Theban trial scene is intentionally a travesty of real trials.⁴⁹ Its judges, defendants, and prosecutors lend it an immediacy that forces upon us the dishonest solidity of a real-world justice system and presents a more shocking expose of immoralist values than even the Melian Dialogue, where the Athenians are also judges (v.86 *kritai*).⁵⁰ It may arguably be read as a further underscoring of the ease with which the prescribed ideals of justice become totally undermined by the savagery and, in this case, the one-sidedness of war. During the trial the only law the Plataians can fall back on is the *nomos* or *nomima* of the Hellenes (56.2; 58.3, cf. 4; 59.1), that is, customary values. In response to the Plataian claim that they have during their history abided by the general laws and that, if the Lacedaemonians were to kill them, it would mean a breach of these, the Thebans justify in turn their own past record, demonstrate that the Plataians are worthy of ‘every punishment [*zemia*]’ (63.1), are in fact now acting according to their *phusis* (64.4), and on account of their former good behaviour (‘if there was any’) require ‘twice as much punishment’. The Thebans finally appeal thus: ‘Defend, then, Lacedaemonians, the law of the Hellenes which has been transgressed by these men, and pay back [*antapodote*] to us who have suffered lawlessness a just recompense [*kharin dikaiain*] for the enthusiasm we have given you’ (67.6).⁵¹ The Lacedaemonians are apparently unmoved by either side, being of the opinion that their original question had been just (68.1). The Plataians, asked the question once more and answering negatively, are executed ‘without exception’ (68.2). Thucydides’ final comment on the matter is the observation that the Spartans’ hostility to Plataia here and elsewhere was purely from reasons of expediency, since they thought the Thebans would be ‘useful in the war then beginning’ (58.5), a view of Spartan justice echoed by the Athenians in the Melian Dialogue (v.105.4).

The ‘laws of the Greeks’, which are so important in this trial, are ‘unwritten laws’.⁵² Pericles mentions these in the Funeral Speech, where he speaks of ‘those laws which are unwritten and carry an acknowledged shame [if they are broken]’ (ii.37.3).⁵³ The notion that shame (*aiskhune*) has a deterrent value is a weak one. Thucydides’ Theban speakers assert that it did not stop the Plataians abandoning the Greek alliance (iii.64.4 ‘the recompense you [Plataians] paid them back was quite shameful’). And in the Melian Dialogue Thucydides allows the Athenians to register the opinion that disgrace is no deterrent at all (v.111.3). Unwritten laws were banned from court at Athens in the period when Thucydides was writing (Andocides i *Mysteries* 85). In the *History* Thucydides, speaking as author, does not attempt to uphold the authority of unwritten or customary law. The importance of the idea in the trial of the Plataians suggests that he placed no faith in it. That does not mean he thought that the restraint of custom or of tradition was a bad thing in itself; but rather that it lacked any ground of enforcement. In inter-*polis* relations no restraints of this sort were possible. At i.77.1 Thucydides’ Athenian speakers do mention ‘agreements’ between Athens and her allies, but these are of a limited application. It is accepted that the *xumbolaiai dikai*, ‘the suits arising from agreements’, which are reported here relate to the general agreements (*sumbolai*) between cities on the procedure to be followed in the event of disputes between their members.⁵⁴ The context of this

passage is the reasonableness of Athens' rule over her subject allies (i.76.4). Whatever its exact meaning regarding the *sumbolai* and whether or not Thucydides believed the Athenians' claim of fairness to the allies in this respect (which is possible),⁵⁵ the real point is that no claim is made by the Athenian speakers or by Thucydides himself to reasonableness in the many other sorts of trial of a 'political' nature which involved the allies as individuals or communities.⁵⁶ It is to trials of this sort that they would have objected especially.⁵⁷ The Plataian-Theban trial is comparable in terms of its singular and unfair aim. Perhaps this is the reason for its inclusion by Thucydides in a Book that has so much to say on the failure of the regulation of human social relations. Much of Book Three is concerned with the problems of imposing restraints on individuals. The Plataian-Theban trial reflects the grave difficulty of establishing controls over communities which do not want them.

In conclusion one may say that Thucydides was perfectly aware of the existence of a routine level of criminal behaviour in society. In this respect he no doubt thought that laws were necessary, if ineffectual. The *kakourgos* had no commitment to society or to its rules. His acts could be explained on this voluntaristic basis together with the influence of dispositional factors like poverty and power. Society at large was, however, when circumstances disposed it to break the laws, still concerned with rules and with neutralizing its bad actions (*dikaiosis*). Here rules seem in Thucydides' view to go beyond what one might call the necessary and to constitute the essential basis of social organization. Thucydides identifies the results of lack of restraint with strong and adverse comment. There is no need to imagine that he considered most people to be bad by nature. He merely assumes that some were.

Aside from his major concern to record the history of the Peloponnesian War Thucydides was clearly interested also in focusing on Athens' social and political workings. He explores the ideology of the Athenian democracy. The discourse of law was an important component of this. And on this level it is natural for him to have taken serious notice of rules and rule-breaking. It is worth noting again that Thucydides' examination of this aspect of breakdown in society combines well with the general statements he makes about human behaviour which are expressed in the language of medicine. For at the level of discourse both medicine and law depend on seeing individuals very much as abstractions, on the one hand as patients in whom a disease works itself out along natural lines which only the doctor can predict, on the other as wrongdoers or wronged whose conflicts the lawgiver is able to resolve with impartiality. At the level of particular texts there is of course a more or a less successful attempt to fit general rules to individual case histories. This should not obscure the tendency of these discourses to construct general rules about how people work. Law and medicine take individuals as fractions of society. In the Hippocratic writers there is very little of the interest in psychology that characterizes Thucydides' *History*. For Thucydides, by contrast, behaviour is responsive to changes of circumstance: under certain conditions certain patterns of conduct are to be expected. Examination of the operation of rules and rule-breaking forms an important part of the exposition of these patterns.

Thucydides' analyses of social fragility at Athens, Kerkyra, and elsewhere are not concerned with how individuals work on their own, but with how individuals

work within their societies. There does not seem to be a direct concern with discovering ‘the good for men...compatible with each man’s constant reflection on his interests’, as Farrar suggests.⁵⁸ Thucydides certainly comments on individual interests. But the perspective on these seems rather a social one. In the crucial passage, iii.83.1, the only passage where Thucydides explicitly as author speaks about moral qualities, the talk is of *gennaiotes* and *to euethes*. These qualities are less about ‘the good’ for ‘each man’ and more about the absence of antagonism between individuals and communities (Thucydides continues by lamenting that ‘mutual antagonism of beliefs destroyed trust over a wide area’), individuals, and communities whose interests and behaviour are closely associated. Thucydides lets it be understood that these interests are best served by restraint, even if restraint, when ‘human nature is wholeheartedly set on doing something’, does not always meet with success.⁵⁹

NOTES

- 1 Cf. S.Todd and P.Millett, ‘Law, society and Athens’, in P.Cartledge, P.Millett, S.Todd (eds), *Nomos. Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1990), 1–19.
- 2 See recently M.Gagarin, *Early Greek Law* (Berkeley, 1986), 99–119; R.Garner, *Law and Society in Classical Athens* (London, 1987), 4–30; S.Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge, 1986), esp. 33–56; E.A.Havelock, *The Greek Concept of Justice: From its Shadow in Homer to its Substance in Plato* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978); M.Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of Athenian Democracy* (Oxford, 1969); J.de Romilly, *La loi dans la pensée grecque des origines à Aristote* (Paris, 1971).
- 3 Good introductions can be found in G.B.Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge, 1981), 111–30, and W.K.C.Guthrie, *The Sophists* (Cambridge, 1971)=*A History of Greek Philosophy* iii.1 (Cambridge, 1969), 55–134. See F.Heinimann, *Nomos und Physis* (Basle, 1945).
- 4 Cf. i.1.2 ‘this was the greatest disruption to the Greeks ever and to some of the barbarians, and one might say to a very large part of mankind’. For various interpretations see J.Latacz, ‘Die rätselhafte “grosse Bewegung” zum Eingang des Thukydideischen Geschichtswerks,’ *WJA* 6a (1980), 77–99; Latacz’s own restriction of ‘the greatest disruption’ to pre-War events is quite unconvincing (cf. Gomme, *HCT* vol. 1 (Oxford, 1956) 91).
- 5 The tradition of rational law goes back in the Greek consciousness at least to the *Iliad* (the Shield of Achilles). For the models of early (real or imaginary) lawcodes of Lycurgus, of Zaleukos, of Solon, and others see Aristotle *Pol.* 1273b27ff. In general, see Gagarin (n. 2). There was of course an important codification of law at the end of the fifth century when Thucydides was writing: see Andocides i *Mysteries* 83–5 with D.MacDowell, *Andokides. On the Mysteries* (Oxford, 1962), 194–99. On the discourse of the law in the orators cf. below at n. 33.
- 6 Cf. now S.Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides* vol. i (Oxford, 1991), 477–88.
- 7 As the forger of iii.84 appreciated (§2 ‘human nature had power over the laws’).
- 8 §3 ‘the outrageous method of revenge’, §7 ‘to get revenge on someone was valued above not having suffered personal injury’, ‘his revenge was sweeter because of

- the trust', §8 'they sought greater revenges...limited for both sides only by the pleasure of the moment'.
- 9 L.Gernet, 'Law and prelaw in ancient Greece', in *The Anthropology of Ancient Greece*, tr. J.Hamilton, S.J.Nagy, and B.Nagy (Baltimore and London, 1981), 143–215. On the development of Gernet's ideas within the school of Durkheim cf. S.C.Humphreys, 'The work of Louis Gernet', in *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London, 1978), 76–106.
 - 10 On *keimenoí nomoi* as written laws, see n. 17.
 - 11 On this translation see M.Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness* (Cambridge, 1986), 507f. n. 24; S.Hornblower, *Thucydides* (London, 1987), 186f. n. 100.
 - 12 i.36.3; ii.60.2, 64.3, 65.4; iv.64.4, 87.6; v.68.2; vi.32.1, 41.2, 67.3; vii.64.2; viii.96.4; cf. G.E.M.de Ste.Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London, 1972), 9 n. 13.
 - 13 i.82.6, 124.1, 144.3; ii.8.4, 64.6; iii.82.2; iv.61.2; with the exception of i.82.6 these passages relate to the threat of war. Cf. C.Farrar, *The Origins of Democratic Thinking. The Invention of Politics in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, 1988), 153.
 - 14 iii.36.6; iv.39.3; v.16.1.
 - 15 For 'ignorance' and 'temperance' with reference to Sparta see i.68.1, 84.3; cf. i.142.8, ii.40.3. See n. 58.
 - 16 Cf. the statement on the purpose of the law at [Demosthenes] xxv *Aristogeiton* i.17 'all laws are enacted for two reasons, first to make sure no one does anything wrong, second to make the rest better men by securing the punishment of transgressors.'
 - 17 iii.45.1 'in the cities the capital penalties are prescribed [*prokeintai*] for many things'. Other examples where *nomos* is qualified by *keimenos* or *prokeimenos* are ii.37.3; iii.45.3, 82.6; iv.133.3; v.105.2; vi.54.6; two of these do not refer to written law (iv.133.3 the priesthood of Hera at Argos; v.105.2 the rule of the strong over the weak), but this is the usual meaning; cf. S.C.Humphreys, 'Law, custom and culture in Herodotus', *Arethusa* 20 (1987), 217f.; *ead.*, 'The discourse of law in ancient Greece', *Law and History Review* 6 (1988), 473. On the written law as a linchpin of the Athenian democracy see especially Euripides *Supplikes* 429–46, Andocides i. *Mysteries* 82–6.
 - 18 Cf. recently T.J.Saunders, *Plato's Penal Code. Tradition, Controversy, and Reform in Greek Penology* (Oxford, 1991), 127–31; of older work see especially W.Müri, 'Beitrag zum Verständnis des Thukydides', *MH* 4 (1947), 251–75=H.Herter (ed.) *Thukydides* (Darmstadt, 1968), 135–70; also P.Shorey, 'On the implicit ethics and psychology of Thucydides', *TAPhA* 25 (1893), 68–71; F.M.Cornford, *Thucydides Mythistoricus* (London, 1907), 221ff.; F.Wassermann, 'Post-Periclean democracy in action: the Mytilene Debate (Thuc. III 37–48)', *TAPhA* 87 (1956), 36f.=Herter op. cit., 492f.; F.Solmsen, *Intellectual Experiments of the Greek Enlightenment* (Princeton, 1975), 128–30.
 - 19 Above n. 13.
 - 20 For *kakourgos* in Thucydides cf. i.8.2 (iii.82.7 is a much looser usage); on the typology of *kakourgoi* as a technical term in Athenian law and on the response to them see A.R.W. Harrison, *The Law of Athens. Procedure* (Oxford, 1971), 17f., 222ff.; M.H.Hansen, *Apagoge, Endeixis and Ephegesis against Kakourgoi, Atimoi and Pheugontes* (Odense, 1976), 36–48. In general to confess or to be convicted of being a *kakourgos* led to immediate execution (as Diodotos reports), though in some cases where the death penalty was prescribed, such as for premeditated

- homicide, there was (it seems) the alternative possibility of self-imposed exile: cf. D.M.MacDowell, *Athenian Homicide Law* (Manchester, 1963), 110–29.
- 21 Essentially Gomme's translation: *HCT* ii.319; cf. H.-P.Stahl, *Thukydides, Die Stellung des Menschen im geschichtlichen Prozess*, Zetemata 40 (Munich, 1966), 122–4 on the irrational factors at work here, and the other literature cited in n. 18.
 - 22 *Eros*, 'love', is a word used only once elsewhere in the *History* at vi.24.3 where it refers to the psychopathical longing that fell upon the Athenians to go to Sicily (cf. also vi.13.1 *duserotas*); but the conspiracy of Harmodios and Aristogeiton against the Athenian tyrant, Hippias, which Thucydides calls 'senseless daring' (vi.59.1), was motivated by it (vi.54.1 'undertaken because of a love affair'). Hope and fortune are commonly mentioned.
 - 23 'Fortune leads a man on...and more so the cities.'
 - 24 N.Loraux in her important *L'invention d'Athènes* (Paris, 1981), 186f. wrongly holds that Pericles downplays the role of the laws by restricting them to the private sphere only (NB in the recent translation, *The Invention of Athens* [Cambridge, Mass, and London, 1986], 184, read 'transfers...to' for 'rejects...in'). That the laws Pericles speaks of are written (statute) laws is sure from the comparison he next draws with 'unwritten laws' (so Ostwald (n. 2) 58; challenged unnecessarily by Loraux, op. cit.).
 - 25 See below at n. 52 on the 'unwritten laws' whose deterrent value is next hinted at. Cf. also Pericles' last speech, less 'idealistic' than the Funeral Speech, but still presenting anti-social behaviour as a hypothetical (ii.63.3). Pericles' 'functionalist' view of law in society compares well with that of Protagoras as outlined in the myth in Plato's *Protagoras* where the possibility of deviance in a society in which all share the cardinal virtues is scarcely admitted (*Prot.* 322d). Protagoras also avoids labelling anyone as a 'criminal', speaking only vaguely of the 'wrongdoer' (*adikon*).
 - 26 On the reversal from the Athens of the Funeral Speech to that of the plague see A.J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (London, 1988), 35; cf. also J.W.Allison, 'Pericles' policy and the plague', *Historia* 32 (1983), 14f.; J.Alsina, 'Hippocrate, Sophocle et la description de la peste chez Thucydide', in G.Baader and R.Winau, *Die hippokratischen Epidemien. Theorie-Praxis-Tradition. Verhandlungen du Ve Colloque Internationale Hippocratique* (Stuttgart, 1989), 213–21.
 - 27 D.Downes and P.Rock, *Understanding Deviance* (2nd edn, Oxford, 1988), 28f.
 - 28 Cf. Pericles at ii.40.1 (the shame of not avoiding poverty), 42.4 (on the poor man's hope of riches).
 - 29 Further, as Saunders (n. 18) notes, Diodotos does *not* discount the effectiveness of the justice system as a whole along the lines of Antiphon in *On Truth* (as was suggested by C.Moulton, 'Antiphon the sophist', *TAPhA* 103 (1972), 361–6).
 - 30 For the rhetoric cf. another emotionally charged passage, vii.75.4: 'sufferings too great for tears'. This aspect of the plague description was well studied by A.Parry, 'The language of Thucydides' description of the plague', *BICS* 16 (1969), 106–18=*The Language of Achilles and Other Papers* (Oxford, 1989), 156–76.
 - 31 *HCT* vol. ii, p. 159 'it is by no means obvious from Thucydides, or from Aristophanes, that this is a correct inference.'
 - 32 Cf. Antiphon *On Truth* (*DK*⁶ 87B44 Fr. A, Col. 1.12ff.) on the advantages to the law-breaker of private delicts. At viii.54.4 (412–411BC) Thucydides mentions private leagues existing *proteron* ('before', in the sense of 'already') for the purpose of

- influencing the courts and the government; it is not clear what *proteron* precisely means here.
- 33 Among other examples see Aeschines iii *Ktesiphon* 1; Antiphon *Herodes* 15, *Khoreutes* 2–6; Demosthenes xxiii *Aristokrates* 86, xxiv *Timokrates* 5, 18, 59, cf. 68f.; [Demosthenes] xxv *Aristogeiton* i.15f.; [Demosthenes] xlvii *Stephanos* ii.12f.; Hypereides *Lycophron* fr. 1; Isocrates xix *Lochites* (cf. N.Fisher, 'The law of *hubris* in Athens', in Cartledge, Millett, Todd (n. 1) esp. 131).
 - 34 On this important passage see C.W.Macleod, 'Thucydides on faction', *PCPhS* 25 (1979), 54–6=*Collected Essays* (Oxford, 1983), 125–7; J.T.Hogan, 'The ἀξίως of words at Thucydides 3.82.4', *GRBS* 21 (1980), 139–49; J.Wilson, "The customary meanings of words were changed"—or were they? a note on Thucydides 3.82.4', *CQ* 32 (1982), 18–20; I. Worthington, 'A note on Thucydides 3.82.4', *LCM* 7 (1982), 124; E.Hussey, 'Thucydidean history and Democritean theory', in P.A.Cartledge and F.D.Harvey (eds), *Crux* (Exeter, 1985), 133f.; N.Loraux, 'Thucydide et la sédition dans les mots', *QS* 12 (no. 23) (1986), 95–134; S.Swain, 'Thucydides 1.22.1 and 3.82.4', *Mnemosyne* 46 (1993), 33–45. For 'reckless daring' cf. vi.59.1 (above n. 22).
 - 35 Calling their actions by a better-sounding name is one of a number of what criminologists recognize (following G.M.Sykes and D.Matza, *Am. Sociol. Rev.* 22 (1957), 664–70) as 'techniques of neutralization'.
 - 36 ii.65.7–12 ('for private ambitions and gains'); vi.16.4 (Alkibiades asserts 'nor is it wrong for a man who is proud of himself to refuse to be equal'—clearly not Thucydides' own view), cf. Athenagoras' words at vi.38.5; viii.89.2 (Theramenes' slogan *isaitera politeia*, 'a more equal government', is a 'political feint' for private ambitions; cf. iii.82.8). With regard to Alkibiades note also vi.15.4, 28.2 on his personal *paranoia*, 'transgression' (the former passage at least probably reflects Thucydides' own view rather than that of the Athenians).
 - 37 'In time of peace and prosperity...they do not face necessities outside their control... war which interrupts the supply of what they need to live on each day, etc.'
 - 38 Contrast the sense of *tukhe*, 'fortune', in iii.45.6. The word *xuntukhia* in the singular means 'chance', 'accident', etc. (i.33.1; iii.112.7; v.11.2; vi.54.1), except perhaps at vii.57.1 ('according to each nation's relation to the *events of the time*' (Dover)). On economic motivation to deviance at iii.45.4 and iii.82.2, cf. H.-G.Saar, 'Die Reden des Kleon und Diodotos und ihre Stellung im Gesamtwerk des Thukydides' (Diss. Hamburg, 1953), 79. Note that Thucydides stresses the importance of economic activity to a social existence in the *Archaeology* (especially i.2.2).
 - 39 Kleon at iii.40.7 'recall how you felt when they made you suffer and how you would have valued being able to crush them above everything; now pay them back [*nun antapodote!*']
 - 40 Note in this regard the interesting passage at Demosthenes xxii *Androtion* 26–7, which shows that real Athenian law found the idea of the autonomous legal subject problematical because of economic inequalities and therefore allowed several different procedural methods of going to law (which presumably entrenched the distinctions between victim and wrongdoer rather than lessening them): '[Solon] thought that no one should be debarred from obtaining justice, as far as he is able. How can this be done? By granting many ways of legal procedure against wrongdoers.' Demosthenes gives details of the various ways of dealing with *klope*, 'theft', and with *asebeia*, 'impiety'. Cf. D.J.Cohen, *Theft in Athenian Law*. Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung und antiken Rechtsgeschichte (Munich, 1983), 38ff.; R.Osborne, 'Law in action in classical Athens', *JHS* 105 (1985), 42.
 - 41 It is only when the Lacedaemonian general Salathios gives the people hoplite

- armour and they threaten to treat with the Athenians, unless there is a free distribution of wheat, that there is any suggestion of variance between elite and ruled (iii.27).
- 42 An argument used by the speaker in Lysias xxiv *Invalid* 15–17 to prove that, because he is poor, he cannot be guilty of *hubris*.
- 43 Cf. similarly Saar (n. 38) 80.
- 44 Farrar's remark, in her interesting study, that Thucydides' presentation of social collapse at iii.82 'reveals the vulnerability of social conventions to the persistent and...desperate pursuit of individual good' (n. 13) 156 is right insofar as influential individuals in Thucydides' analysis do involve the majority in rule-breaking; but aside from certain individuals in particular circumstances there is nothing to suggest that Thucydides (if he expressed himself in this way) would have seen rules as things totally external to most individuals, as she suggests.
- 45 It is nowhere argued that superior power morally entitles the Athenians or others to behave as they will: see de Ste. Croix (n. 12) 15 on v.105.
- 46 Cf. Aristophanes *Eq.* 1111ff.

Demos, glorious indeed is your
Rule, seeing that all
Men fear you like
A man who is a tyrant

- with Thucydides i.122.3; ii.63.2; iii.37.2; vi.85.1; see W.R.Connor, 'Tyrannis Polis', in J.H.D'Arms and J.W.Eadie (eds), *Ancient and Modern. Essays in Honor of G.F.Else* (Ann Arbor, 1977), 95–109; T.F.Scanlon, 'Thucydides and tyranny', *CA* 6.2 (1987), 286–301.
- 47 As for example is done by O.Murray, in J.Boardman, J.Griffin, and O.Murray (eds), *The Oxford History of the Classical World* (Oxford, 1986), 195f. on the basis of the speeches; cf. Hornblower (n. 11) 189f. for forceful objections to this thesis.
- 48 vii.30.4: 'considering the size of Mykalessos the calamity it suffered was no less worthy of grieving [*olophuresthai*] than any other that happened during the war'.
- 49 See C.W.Macleod, 'Thucydides' Plataean debate', *GRBS* 18 (1977), 227–46=*id.* (n. 34) 103–22. Cf. Antiphon *On Truth* (B44 Fr. A, Cols. 6–7; Cols. I–II) on the injustices and difficulties of the court system.
- 50 The Athenian speakers there quickly disallow the Melians the chance of a forensic debate: v.89.
- 51 For *antapodote* here and the common idea of equivalence in punishment cf. n. 39.
- 52 R.Hirzel, 'Ἀγροφος νόμος'. *Abhandl. d.Kön. Sächs. Gesellsch. d.Wissensch., phil.-hist. Kl.* no. 1, 1900, esp. 20ff.; Guthrie (n. 3) 117–31.
- 53 According to [Lysias] vi *Andocides* 10 Pericles advocated the employment of written and unwritten laws in trials for impiety.
- 54 G.E.M.de Ste.Croix, 'Notes on jurisdiction in the Athenian Empire. I', *CQ* 11 (1961), 95–112; R.Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972), 228–33; R.I.Winton, 'φιλοδικεῖν δοκοῦμεν. Law and paradox in the Athenian empire', *MH* 37 (1980), 89–97.
- 55 Cf. the remarks of Phrynikhos (for whom Thucydides had much respect: viii.27.5) at viii.48.6 on the protection offered by the Athenian *demos* to the allies against the greed of the Athenian elite (with G.E.M.de Ste.Croix, 'The character of the Athenian empire', *Historia* 3 (1954), 37f.).
- 56 That is, trials held at Athens, under whatever pretext, which furthered and extended Athenian control over their subjects (see G.E.M.de Ste.Croix, 'Notes on jurisdiction in the Athenian empire. II', *CQ* 11 (1961), 268–80 on 'the political value of control of

- jurisdiction'). Thucydides is silent on the Athenian courts hearing appeals against tribute demands (R.Meiggs and D.Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC* (Oxford, 1969), 197–8 on ML 69).
- 57 Meiggs (n. 54) 233.
- 58 Farrar (n. 13) 130f. Farrar suggests that Thucydides aims particularly to encourage personal prudence and self-control. In the *History* personal prudence/temperance is in fact a quality associated more with the peculiarities of Sparta (above n. 15) than one generally desirable by all; cf. H.North, *Sophrosyne: Self-knowledge and Self-restraint in Greek Literature* (Ithaca, 1966), 100–16.
- 59 I would like to thank Edward Hussey, Simon Hornblower, and Anton Powell for encouragement and comments.

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PLATO'S OBJECTIONS TO THE SOPHISTS



T.H.Irwin

DISPUTES ABOUT PLATO'S ATTITUDE

The attitudes of modern English-speaking readers to the sophists, and to Plato's criticisms of them, have been formed, directly or indirectly, by debates between Grote and his critics. Grote was moved to write his defence of the sophists by the prevailing attitude he saw among German critics, under the influence of Hegel. Hegel believed that Plato's presentation of the sophists was correct, and that Plato presented them as holding a specific and mistaken philosophical position. According to Hegel, the sophists have an important place in the development of philosophy because they shook up ordinary unreflective convictions, and drew the conclusion that nothing could be known to be true and no objective facts, independent of the beliefs held by this or that particular subject, could be recognized:

The Sophists thus knew that on this basis nothing was secure, because the power of thought treated everything dialectically. This was the formal culture which they had and imparted, for their acquaintanceship with so many points of view shook what was morality in Greece (the religion, duties, and laws, unconsciously exercised), since through its limited content, that came into collision with what was different. Once it was highest and ultimate, then it was deposed. Ordinary knowledge thus becomes confused, as we shall see very clearly in Socrates, for something is held to be certain for consciousness, and then other points of view which are also present and recognized, have similarly to be allowed; hence the first has no further value, or at least loses its supremacy.¹

While Hegel's presentation of the sophists in their historical situation is by no means unfavourable, it was taken to support the judgement that their character was suspect and their philosophy was immature and adolescent. In presenting this general view Grant contrasts 'the era of popular or unconscious morals' with 'the transitional, sceptical, or sophistic era', and compares these two stages with 'the simplicity and trust of childhood' succeeded by 'the unsettled and undirected force of youth'. In Grant's rather optimistic story these two stages are succeeded by the third 'conscious or philosophic era', which corresponds to 'the wisdom of matured life'.²

Grote makes several claims in reply to the Hegelian picture of the sophists:

- 1 The sophists do not form a philosophical school; they do not share any specific philosophical outlook.
- 2 The sharp antithesis between the Socratic and the sophistic outlook is unjustified; in many ways Socrates was a sophist just as much as any so-called sophist was.
- 3 Plato's picture of the sophists is responsible for their bad reputation:

[Socrates and Plato] considered the name Sophist, denoting intellectual celebrity combined with an odious association, as pre-eminently suitable to the leading teachers for pay. The splendid genius, the lasting influence, and the repeated polemics, of Plato, have stamped it upon the men against whom he wrote as if it were their recognized, legitimate, and peculiar designation.³

- 4 When we understand Plato's criticism of the sophists, we will see that it is largely irrelevant to a true estimate of their merits. He criticizes them because they were public and practical moralists, not abstract theorists, and the features that he criticizes are inseparable from the sophists' profession, which is no more discreditable than that of a teacher or politician in a modern state.

In so far as Protagoras or Gorgias talked the language of ethical theory, they were doubtless much inferior to Plato, nor would their doctrines be likely to hold against his acute dialectics. But it was neither their duty, nor their engagement, to reform the state, or discover and vindicate the best theory on ethics. ...Their direct business was with ethical precept, not with ethical theory: all that was required of them as to the latter, was, that their theory should be sufficiently sound to lead to such practical precepts as were accounted virtuous by the most estimable society *in Athens*.⁴

- 5 Plato's account of the sophists is far less unfavourable than many readers tend to suppose; in particular, he does not accuse them of advocating, or tending to promote, immoral behaviour.

We know these latter [sc. the sophists] chiefly from the evidence of Plato, their pronounced enemy: yet even his evidence, when construed candidly and taken as a whole, will not be found to justify the charges of corrupt and immoral teaching, impostrous pretence of knowledge, &c, which the modern historians pour forth in loud chorus against them.⁵

The next important contributions to debates about the sophists were made by Mill,⁶ and especially by Sidgwick, who sought to defend and strengthen the fifth part of Grote's case.⁷ Sidgwick argued that Plato did not present the sophists as members of a specific philosophical movement, and that he did not attribute to them the sorts of errors that are represented in the Hegelian view. While not committing himself to the most favourable aspects of Grote's view of the sophists, Sidgwick argued that Plato did not share Hegel's view of the place of the sophists in philosophy or the history of thought.

Though Sidgwick wrote his essay on the sophists well over a century ago, it has still not had the influence it deserves on our attitude to Plato and the sophists. While many

later writers have wanted to avoid overdrawn contrasts between Plato and 'the sophists', taken collectively, some of these contrasts have been too appealing to be abandoned entirely. Indeed, some later writers have been encouraged to revive the Hegelian contrast for reasons precisely opposite to Hegel's; they have found the views that Hegel attributes to the sophists quite appealing, and far preferable to Plato's. Guthrie describes this collective sophistic outlook (which he does not endorse) as follows:

They shared the general philosophical outlook described...under the name of empiricism, and with this went a common scepticism about the possibility of certain knowledge, on the grounds both of the inadequacy and fallibility of our faculties and of the absence of a stable reality to be known.⁸

Some writers have attempted to connect this supposed empiricism and positivism of the sophists with a generally liberal and pro-democratic moral and political outlook. Havelock states a fairly extreme version of this attitude to Plato and the sophists. He claims (absurdly) that 'no philosopher in his senses will take the trouble to report with historical fidelity views which, intellectually, he cannot accept',⁹ and infers that Plato's account of the sophists cannot be historically accurate. Still, he believes the sophists had a plausible philosophical outlook which we can discern beneath Plato's hostile presentation of it:

But the historian, even as he discounts Plato's judgmental evaluation of sophistic, can find in Plato's hostility a valuable guide, a signpost, to what precisely sophistic doctrine was. It was everything that Platonism was not. Somehow it looked at men from the outside; it was non-psychic. Perhaps it was historical; certainly it must also have been relativist and anti-metaphysical....¹⁰

Indeed, it is sometimes suggested that Plato accuses the sophists of immoral teaching, and thereby shows his own groundless prejudice against them, so that their views need to be rescued from Plato's misrepresentation of them. Lloyd-Jones presents a sweeping and reckless statement of this assessment of Plato: '[Plato] strongly maintains that the atheism and immoralism of the sophists and their pupils were in a large measure responsible for the immoral policies adopted by the Greek states, particularly the Athenian democracy'.¹¹

Some writers refuse to attribute 'immoralism' to the sophists themselves, but they attribute it to the influence (perhaps unintended) of the sophists and their pupils. Dodds states this view of Kallikles and the sophists quite forcefully: 'the older Sophists were as anxious as Jeremy Bentham to fit their individualism into the framework of traditional ethical thinking. Yet it was they or their pupils who furnished Kallikles with his intellectual weapons.'¹² Dodds presents this as an account of the historical influence of the sophists on Kallikles, not as an account of Plato's view of their influence. Can it also be defended as an account of Plato's view? De Romilly believes it can; for she argues that Dodds's view is also Plato's view, and that it is embodied in Plato's presentation of Kallikles:

Had the Sophists had nothing to do with the current amorality, Plato would have not needed to start the discussion with Gorgias or to ascribe to his Callicles ideas so closely connected with their doctrines. The very fact that Callicles is sometimes mistakenly described as one of the Sophists in itself

testifies to the connection that Plato subtly conveys. Conversely, however, if the Sophists had been themselves immoralists, Plato would not have needed to create his Callicles.¹³

Barnes suggests that Plato's presentation of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos shows that Grote was wrong in his evaluation of the sophists:

Grote overstated his case: the performances of Thrasymachus in the *Republic* and of Callicles in the *Gorgias*; the speeches in Thucydides' Mytilenean debate and in his Melian Dialogue; and the *agon* between Just and Unjust *Logos* in the *Clouds*, are evidence enough of that.¹⁴

The judgements on Plato by Lloyd-Jones, de Romilly, and Barnes have been so thoroughly refuted by Grote, Mill, and Sidgwick that it is surprising to see that they are still maintained. But since they are still maintained, it is still worth seeing what is wrong with them. Many of my arguments are derived from Sidgwick, though I will dispute one of his main claims later on.

THE EVIDENCE

We need to examine Plato's remarks about sophists, to see what we can infer about his conception of the sophistic outlook. For this purpose, I want to set aside questions about the historical accuracy of Plato's account of the views of particular sophists, and about our evidence from sources outside Plato. I am therefore not trying to present any conclusions about the sophists themselves; I simply want to consider what Plato does and does not say about them.

I still need to define the question more exactly, however. If we are to consider 'what Plato says about the sophists' or 'Plato's view of the sophists', what are we to treat as our evidence? Different views of Plato's attitude have sometimes resulted from different answers to this question.

Four sets of passages in the dialogues may be considered: (1) Plato sometimes presents criticisms of 'the sophists' collectively, not just of individual sophists. (2) Sometimes a figure in a dialogue is introduced by name and called a sophist. (3) Sometimes a figure is introduced by name, and we believe, on evidence outside the dialogue or outside Plato, that he is a sophist. (4) Sometimes views are introduced that we believe, on similar 'external' evidence, to be characteristic of sophists, or attributable to some individual sophist.

Our decision about what to count as evidence may make quite a large difference to our account of Plato's views. If we rely on the third and fourth groups of passages, we may be able to expand our account; for Plato may well say something about a sophist in one of these passages that he does not say in the first two groups of passages. Indeed, I will point out places where this is so.

For present purposes, however, I want to confine myself to passages in the first two groups. Some passages in the fourth group may be contentious; for the considerations that influence some interpreters in describing a view as 'sophistical' may rest on views about the nature of sophistic doctrine or the sophistic movement that ought not to be accepted without question.

It might seem less hazardous to rely on the third group of passages; for if Plato or someone else regards X as a sophist, can we not be confident in treating Plato's remarks about X as part of his view of the sophists? This is not as easy as it may sound, however. Sometimes the arguments for believing that X is a sophist may be controversial; moreover, even if Plato calls X a sophist in some contexts, it may be significant that he refrains from saying this about X in other contexts. If we are entitled to assume that Plato intends his readers to keep in mind the fact that X is a sophist when they read a specific passage about X, then we are entitled to take this passage as evidence for his view of the sophists; but in a passage where X is not actually called a sophist some argument is needed to show that we are entitled to make this assumption about Plato's intentions.

For this reason it is wisest to confine our discussion of Plato, in the first instance, to passages in the first two groups, where it is clear that Plato is deliberately focusing on views that he identifies as sophistical. We need to begin with these passages in any case, if we are to evaluate the evidence provided by the third and fourth group of passages.¹⁵

THE SOPHISTS AND THE DECLINE OF MORALITY

Plato is often said to accuse the sophists of a significant degree of responsibility for some decline of moral standards in Athens. It is often supposed that this verdict of Plato's can be supported by appeal to other historical evidence; and so Plato's accusation seems to identify an influence of the sophistic movement on Athenian thought and society.

What sort of moral decline do historians usually have in mind? Some remarks from Thucydides are often cited. He mentions that during the Great Plague in Athens people began to ignore conventional moral restraints on their behaviour, believing that these did not matter when they were facing the prospect of an early death (ii.53). In commenting on the civil conflict in Kerkyra Thucydides remarks that under the pressure of war Greeks tended to abandon moral restraints that limited the ruthless pursuit of advantage for their own side in civil conflicts (iii.82.2). In their dealings with Melos, as presented by Thucydides, the Athenians discount the significance of justice and morality as restraints on the pursuit of their own power (v.105.2).

Traditional Greek morality was closely connected with belief in gods who punished infractions of morality. Some evidence suggests that during the Peloponnesian War the Athenians prosecuted suspected 'atheists' who did not believe in the Olympian gods. In a play produced late in the war Kritias (or Euripides) presents Sisyphos arguing that belief in the gods is simply the result of a fiction invented to support traditional morality (DK 88 B 25).

This belief in a decline of traditional religion and morality cannot be dismissed as simply the invention of modern historians influenced by supposed modern parallels. The accusation against Socrates suggests that his accusers see some connection between cosmological speculation, atheism, and corrupting the young men. Socrates suggests that his audience may have been influenced in their view of him by Aristophanes' *Clouds* (*Ap.* 19c1–5); and it is natural to suppose that Aristophanes sees the same

connection.¹⁶ It would probably be a mistake to include Aristophanes among those who believe that sophists are responsible for immorality. In the *Clouds* it is Strepsiades' initial desire to evade the requirements of ordinary morality that leads him to cultivate the tricks he learns from Socrates. None the less, the *Clouds* leaves the unmistakable impression that sophists are dangerous in so far as they encourage people in their evasions of morality and supply them with argumentative weapons for their immoral purposes.

It is not unlikely that the sophists are connected with these movements. Since they offered higher education to the upper classes, and since they discussed questions in religion and in ethics, it is reasonable to suppose that some sophistic discussions and doctrines influenced some Athenians who questioned traditional religion and morality. Aeschines refers to some of these influences when he alleges (many years after the event) that the Athenians put 'Socrates the sophist' to death because he had been the teacher of Kritias, 'one of the Thirty who overthrew the democracy'.¹⁷

We can even identify a sophist who raised the sorts of doubts about traditional morality that might be expected to encourage immoral behaviour. Antiphon suggests that the requirements of morality are imposed by 'law' or 'convention' (*nomos*), forcibly restraining nature (*phusis*); we have good reason to obey the requirements of law if we will be found out and punished for violations, but we have good reason to obey the demands of nature whether or not we will be found out.¹⁸ This account of the roles of law and nature might reasonably encourage us to believe that we have good reason to violate law and justice when we can avoid punishment.

Antiphon's arguments about nature and conventional justice provide some specific support for the general allegations of Aristophanes and others. While it would be foolish to suggest that sophistical doctrines and arguments were entirely to blame for some people's rejection of the restraints imposed by traditional morality, it is reasonable to suggest that if we are persuaded by someone like Antiphon to regard traditional morality as simply the result of force exercised in some people's interest against other people's interest,¹⁹ we are likely to be less reluctant to modify the balance of force in our own interest if we see the opportunity.

PLATO ON THE DECLINE OF MORALITY

If other people already tended to blame sophistical thinking for the decline of morality, Plato might reasonably be expected to endorse this charge against the sophists. For we have seen that some people tended to treat Socrates as a sophist, and to accuse him of spreading harmful sophistic teaching. Plato wants to separate Socrates sharply from the sophists, and to deny that Socrates was an opponent of morality and justice; he could have done this by presenting the sophists in an unfavourable light, in order to show how different Socrates was.

Moreover, Plato presents elaborate attacks on traditional morality. Kallikles in the *Gorgias* and Thrasymakhos in *Republic* i make a case against conventional justice that is quite similar to Antiphon's case. Kallikles accepts and exploits Antiphon's antithesis between law and nature, and Glaukon and Adeimantos, supporting Thrasymakhos, argue that we have good reason to commit injustice if we can get

away with it. We might easily suppose that Plato presents these attacks on morality in order to support his indictment of sophistic teaching and its tendencies.

This is in fact how Plato is often interpreted. As we have seen, he is often taken to believe that a slippery slope draws us inexorably from the sophistic teaching of Protagoras to the immoralism of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos.²⁰ We make the first move down the slippery slope (on this view) when we admit the division between nature and convention. This division is a hallmark of sophistic teaching; and according to Protagoras, traditional morality is simply a product of convention, with no basis in nature. Exploiting this admission, Kallikles and Thrasymakhos argue that since there is no basis apart from convention to support traditional morality, we have no reason to follow traditional morality when we gain some significant advantage by violating it. In his presentation of these three characters in the dialogues Plato (allegedly) constructs his case against sophistic thought.

This interpretation of Plato expresses a view of sophistic that we can find in contemporary sources. Still, it is mistaken, as we can discover if we are not too hasty in our reading of the dialogues.

Our view of Plato's presentation of the sophists depends on whether we believe that Kallikles and Thrasymakhos are intended to represent sophistic views. We might argue that Kallikles' views sound quite similar to Antiphon's, and that Thrasymakhos was known to be a sophist. Since Plato's original readers were familiar with the relevant facts about Antiphon and Thrasymakhos, he must have intended (we might argue) to exploit his readers' reactions as part of his case against sophistic.

We may examine this argument by considering the *Gorgias* and *Republic* in turn. Kallikles is never said to be a sophist or to be influenced by the teaching of sophists; and none of Plato's general remarks about sophists appears in any passage describing Kallikles. If Plato intended us to regard him as a typical product of sophistic teaching, he missed his opportunity to signal his intention to us. Since it would have been easy for Plato to mention sophists and sophistic views if he had wanted to mention them in his description of Kallikles, the fact that he fails to mention them must be given some weight.

Kallikles makes one remark about sophists. When Socrates mentions them under their usual description as people who 'claim to be teachers of virtue' (519c3–5, e7–8), Kallikles asks 'Why do you mention <these> worthless creatures?' (520a1–2).²¹ If Kallikles is made to display such contempt towards the sophists, it may seem reasonable to conclude that Plato cannot mean to criticize the sophists through Kallikles.

This conclusion may be too hasty, however. For Socrates' reply to Kallikles suggests that Kallikles is being inconsistent in despising sophists while valuing rhetoric (520a3–b3). He suggests that rhetoric is related to sophistic in the way that legislation is related to the administration of justice (cf. 465b6–c7). In Socrates' view, both sophistic and rhetoric are examples of 'knacks' (*empeiriai*) that are practised without the rational understanding that is characteristic of a craft (*tekhne*, 465a2–7). If the comparison with legislation and administration of justice is pressed, Socrates suggests that rhetoric uses moral and political principles without the proper understanding of them or their point; and the parallel point about sophistic would suggest that the sophist formulates general principles without the proper understanding. Socrates recognizes that it is easy to confuse rhetoric and sophistic; he believes they should be distinguished, but he suggests that they share important

flaws. If this is so, we must look more carefully at what he says about rhetoric; for if he suggests that the rhetorical outlook is somehow responsible for Kallikles' views, we might infer that Plato intends some corresponding objection to sophistic.

Socrates does not suggest, however, that any outlook typical of rhetoric is responsible for Kallikles' moral views. On the contrary, Plato makes it clear that the professional rhetorician Gorgias is not an opponent of conventional morality; Gorgias claims that he teaches his pupils rhetoric so that they can use it justly (456c6–457c3). Polos and Kallikles suggest that rhetoric is useful to politicians who want to use it unjustly; but they never suggest that anything about rhetoric or about teachers of rhetoric is responsible for people's initial desire to act unjustly. The dialogue gives no support to the view that either rhetoric or sophistic provides either a motive or a justification for the sort of behaviour that Kallikles advocates.

In this dialogue Gorgias is never described as a sophist;²² and so Plato's criticisms of Gorgias cannot automatically be taken as a criticism of the sophists. We must, then, wait to see whether any of the criticisms are echoed in any of Plato's remarks about the sophists in general or about individuals that he calls sophists. In any case, the criticisms that are levelled against Gorgias and against rhetoricians give no support to the view that Plato takes either rhetoricians or sophists to be responsible for Kallikles' views about morality.

The presentation of Thrasymakhos in *Republic* i offers equally little support to the view that Plato holds sophists responsible for critical attitudes to conventional morality. At one point Thrasymakhos demands payment for the instruction he is going to give Socrates (337d6–10). This mercenary remark might be intended to identify him as a sophist;²³ but it might equally be intended to mark him as a professional rhetorician. Plato alludes no further to sophists or to rhetoricians. In Book ii Glaukon and Adeimantos claim to revive the argument of Thrasymakhos. It would have been easy to make them say 'as Thrasymakhos and many other sophists argue', or something similar, if Plato had intended to suggest that Thrasymakhos' views are a typical expression, or a predictable outcome, of sophistic views. The fact that Plato says nothing of the kind suggests strongly that he does not want to use Thrasymakhos to make any point about the sophists. In the *Laws* he refers again to the view of justice that is taken by Thrasymakhos (714b3–715a3). The view is simply attributed to 'some people', and Plato never suggests that these people are sophists.

To show that Plato believes sophistic teaching is connected with Thrasymakhos' views of morality some people rely on a passage in *Laws* x, where Plato argues that atheism is connected to the rejection of morality (889b–890a). He mentions the views of people who reject theistic views of the universe, regard the gods as fictions, and regard principles of justice as the product of convention rather than nature; from all this they infer that justice is constituted by nothing more than superior force. The conclusion about justice is certainly quite similar to that of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos. According to Taylor, Plato attacks 'the early Ionian men of science, who account for the order of nature on purely "mechanical" principles' and 'the sophistic theory of the purely conventional and relative character of moral distinctions'.²⁴ If this is true, then the passage gives some support to the view that Plato means to blame sophistic teaching for radical attacks on conventional morality.

It is difficult to accept this view of the passage, however. Plato says nothing to suggest that he believes that the division between nature and convention is especially sophistic. If he had wanted to blame the sophists for the moral views that he rejects, it would be odd that he misses this opportunity to accuse them. The views about justice are said to be characteristic of poets and prose-writers who have a reputation for wisdom among young men; and the writer whom Plato clearly has in mind is not Protagoras or Antiphon or Gorgias, but Pindar (890a2–5; cf. 690b7–c3, 715a1–2, *Gorg.* 484b1–c3).

Should we then suppose that (as Taylor suggests) the division between nature and convention is so clearly a sophistic division that Plato's readers would immediately recognize an allusion to the sophists in this passage? If this could be shown, then we would have a fresh argument for the view that Kallikles is intended to represent a sophistic position. We have Aristotle's authority to support the claim that the sophists used the division between nature and convention as a basis for some of their arguments (*Top.* 173a7–18); he mentions the passage in the *Gorgias* where Kallikles complains that Socrates exploits this division illegitimately (482e2–483a7).²⁵ Is this enough to show that the passage in the *Laus* must be taken as an attack on the sophists?

Aristotle does not suggest that recognition of the division between nature and convention was in any way peculiar to the sophists, and we have no reason to suppose that it was peculiar to them. The distinction is exploited by Demokritos (DK 68 B 9, 125), and may have been applied to morality by Arkhelaos, who is reported to have said that 'the just and the fine are not by nature, but by convention' (Diogenes Laertius ii 16=DK 60 A 1).²⁶ If we insist (unwisely) on regarding this division as a hallmark of some group of thinkers, we have at least as good reason for attributing it to natural philosophers as we have for attributing it to sophists. The rest of the passage in the *Laus* makes it reasonable to regard some doctrines of natural philosophers as Plato's targets; there is no reason to suppose that he has sophists especially in mind, or that he regards Kalliklean views about nature and convention in morality as typically sophistic views.²⁷ We ought, then, to agree with Sidgwick's verdict: 'The commentators do not hesitate to treat these passages²⁸ as referring to the Sophists; in fact, they make the reference in such a matter-of-course manner, that one is startled to find how entirely unauthorized it is.'²⁹

These points about the passage in *Laus* x should confirm us in the conclusion we drew from considering the *Gorgias* and *Republic* i. Nothing whatever in these latter two dialogues, or in the rest of Plato, suggests that he means us to regard the views of Kallikles or Thrasymakhos as typical of sophists, or as a product of sophistic teaching; and nothing whatever suggests that he means to hold the sophists responsible for the views about morality that these two characters defend.

We reach the same conclusion if we look at Plato's remarks about named or unnamed sophists, to see whether they suggest the conclusions of a Kallikles or a Thrasymakhos. We find one sophist, Hippias, who accepts the division between nature and law, and states it in terms unfavourable to law (*Pr.* 337c7–e2). But Plato makes nothing of Hippias' view; he does not discuss it at length, and he certainly does not suggest that it is at all typical of sophists, or that it is at all discreditable of Hippias to accept it. The fuller discussions of Protagoras, Hippias, and Prodikos do

not suggest that Plato sees any important connection between their outlook and that of Kallikles or Thrasymakhos. In the *Hippias Major* Socrates examines Hippias' attitude to law and suggests that it is confused (284d1–285b7); he does not suggest that it leads Hippias towards agreement with Kallikles. Plato's general remarks about sophists suggest nothing to change our minds on this issue.

Plato not only fails to make the general case against the sophists that some interpreters attribute to him; he actually goes out of his way to cast doubt on it. The main argument of the *Meno* is interrupted by Anytos, one of the accusers at Socrates' trial. Anytos suggests that a search for specialized teachers of virtue is misguided, since any gentleman is a perfectly competent teacher of virtue. When Socrates suggests that the sophists might be considered as possible teachers of virtue, Anytos rejects the suggestion peremptorily (*Meno* 91b2–92b4); he regards the sophists with the hostility and suspicion that many modern readers attribute to Plato. Socrates, however, makes Anytos admit that he knows nothing specific about any of the sophists or about what exactly they teach; he simply takes over popular prejudices against them (92b5–c5).

In this passage Plato does not say that the sophists are unobjectionable; he simply suggests that popular prejudice against them as subverters of morality is based on ignorance and that we ought to see whether their views really justify the widespread objections to them. If we look at dialogues where he examines the sophists, we find no suggestion that they generally tend to be critics of traditional morality; and if we look at dialogues where he presents criticisms of traditional morality, we find no suggestion that these criticisms come from sophists.

In the light of this evidence we can reach a decision about one aspect of Plato's account of the sophists. We need not defend the sophists against Plato's charge that they undermined traditional morality; for he makes no such charge. Nor need we defend Plato against the charge of having blackened the sophists' reputation by associating them with Kallikles and Thrasymakhos; for he does not associate them with these critics of traditional morality. Plato's presentation of the sophists does not refute the view that their views tended to undermine traditional morality; but someone who wants to defend this view must defend it without any help from Plato. In fact, Plato suggests that some criticisms of the sophists along these lines tend to express uninformed hostility that cannot be defended in the light of a closer scrutiny of their position.

PLATO'S OBJECTIONS TO THE SOPHISTS

Now that we have set aside one view of Plato's attitude to the sophists, we can examine with a more open mind some of his objections to the sophists in general and to particular sophists. We must treat these two groups of objections separately. Since Plato presents some objections to the sophists generally, we expect him to show how these are borne out in at least some particular cases. To see whether they are borne out or not, we should begin with the general objections to sophists.

The most important passage comes in *Republic* vi. Socrates is explaining how difficult it is for someone with a philosophical nature to resist the influence of popular views:

Or do you think, as the many do, that some of the young men are corrupted by sophists, and that some private individuals who are sophists corrupt them, to any extent worth speaking of? Aren't the many who say these things the greatest sophists themselves? Don't they educate people most completely? Don't they form the sorts of characters they want in young people and old, in men and women alike?

(492a5–b3)

Plato suggests that the many put the blame on the wrong people when they accuse the sophists of corrupting the young men; for in fact their own corrupting influence is much more profound.

In Plato's view, the sophists are not radical critics; their efforts at education simply take their cue from the beliefs of the many, which the sophists present as wisdom (493a6–9). In their judgements about justice and goodness the sophists simply follow the preferences of the many, without having any independent knowledge of their own (493b7–c9). This sophistic imitation of received views belongs at the lowest stage of the Divided Line, the cognitive condition called 'imagination' (*eikasia*; see 511d6–e5, 514a1–515c2).

The sophists are presented in the same way in the *Sophist*; just as in the *Republic*, they are said to deal purely in appearances (*Sph.* 236b4–c8). This does not mean that everything they say is false or even misleading; it means that they and their pupils have no critical capacity for distinguishing the aspects of common beliefs that are true or reasonable from those that are false or unjustified.

These judgements about the sophists are both less and more complimentary than the common estimate that Plato rejects. Plato is less complimentary than the common view, in so far as he suggests that the common estimate exaggerates the sophists' intellectual achievement, in suggesting that they actually manage to formulate and defend some new moral outlook of their own; he answers that the sophists are not original enough to manage this. On the other hand, Plato is less uncomplimentary than the common view, in so far as he suggests that the sophists should not be accused of teaching any new immoral doctrine; everything that common sense objects to can be found within common sense itself.

This last claim needs some defence. When Plato claims that the many corrupt people more than the sophists do, what does he mean? (1) He may be expressing his disapproval of what people are usually taught; even though the many themselves do not regard this as corruption, that is how Plato regards it. (2) He may mean that common beliefs are the source of what the many themselves regard as corruption; they do not realize that they themselves encourage the sort of behaviour that they deplore, and so they blame the sophists for encouraging it.

These two points are not mutually exclusive; Plato may intend both. In the context the first point is quite relevant, but the second point would make his case even stronger. The second point suggests that the common-sense moral outlook is so deeply flawed that it actually encourages the behaviour that tends to undermine it.

To see how Plato might defend this second charge against common sense, we need only look back to *Republic* ii. In describing the sources of Thrasymakhos' attitude to justice Glaukon and Adeimantos do not mention sophists, natural philosophers, rhetoricians, or any other

thinkers usually regarded as innovative. They mention Homer, the tragedians, traditional myths about the gods, and everyday moral maxims and advice—all the sources of traditional morality (*Rep.* 362e1–365c6). These influences are, in their view, enough to explain why people see no point in being just if they can get away with unjust action.

Many of Socrates' and Plato's contemporaries blame the sophists for encouraging people to disregard the obligations of justice, and to pursue their own interest without respect for other people's legitimate claims on them. Plato argues, however, that traditional morality encourages precisely this attitude, by suggesting that we often benefit by acting unjustly and that it pays to act justly only if external rewards and punishments are suitably distributed. These traditional attitudes encourage us to believe that our being just is beneficial to someone else, and our being unjust is beneficial, in the right circumstances, to ourselves. While many people deplore the views of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos, they do not realize that their own conception of morality leaves them defenceless against these views.

If Plato is right about common-sense moral attitudes, then his objection to the sophists is different from the usual one. In his view, their fault is that while they profess to have something better to offer than mere common sense, their understanding of moral questions goes no deeper than common sense, and they do not see what is defective in common sense. Their fault is not that they are too critical of common sense, but that they are not critical enough.

If this is Plato's objection to the sophists, then Grote's defence of them is not good enough. Earlier I quoted Grote's claim that the sophists' direct business 'was with ethical precept, not with ethical theory'. By this he meant that Plato was criticizing them by a standard that was irrelevant to their actual aims, since their only task was to make sure 'that their theory should be sufficiently sound to lead to such practical precepts as were accounted virtuous by the most estimable society in Athens'. If Plato is right, however, the sophists cannot fulfil this task; for the uncritical articulation of common-sense morality leads to conclusions that are unacceptable to common sense. Plato's criticism may be true or false; but it is at any rate highly relevant to the practical tasks that (as Grote correctly remarks) the sophists set themselves.

This is Plato's general objection to 'the sophists'; he does not name any particular sophist. We should consider next whether this general objection is supported by his description of particular sophists and sophistic positions.

PROTAGORAS

The dialogue named after Protagoras is intended to present and evaluate the sophists in general. The introductory conversation with Hippokrates considers what people generally expect, and what they ought to expect, from a sophist (310d2–314c2); and the last few pages of the dialogue secure the assent of all the sophists present to the conclusions of the argument (358a1–5, 358e6–359a1). Protagoras speaks at length; Prodikos contributes to the discussion; and Hippias intervenes briefly. Though Plato sets out to discuss the sophists in general, he does not homogenize their positions. Protagoras claims to be different from some of the other sophists, since he does not waste his pupils' time with various crafts and branches of knowledge that are (in his view) irrelevant to the sophist's main aim of teaching people to deliberate well on

moral and political questions (318d5–319a2). He does not conceal his aims, but openly admits that he is a sophist and that he educates people (317b3–5). He suggests that this claim of the sophists arouses suspicion, and that therefore some sophists are unwilling to make it openly; but in his view it ought not to be concealed. In examining Protagoras' claim to be a teacher of virtue, Plato is examining a claim that he attributes to the sophists in general (cf. *Ap.* 19d8–20c3).

We are justified, then, in asking whether the evaluation of sophistic teaching in the *Protagoras* supports Plato's verdict on sophistic in the *Republic* and *Sophist*. We cannot simply assume that all these dialogues will take the same view of the sophists; they belong to different parts of Plato's career, and he may have changed his mind about the sophists. Still, the *Protagoras* comes closest to promising a defence of the criticisms presented in the *Republic*, and we ought to see what sort of defence it offers.

Protagoras makes a long and impressive speech in defence of his claim to teach virtue; he claims that the Athenians teach virtue collectively, and that he teaches it simply by doing a bit better the very same thing that everyone does (328a8–c2). In his conclusion he claims to have shown that (1) virtue is teachable, and (2) the Athenians believe virtue is teachable (328c3–4). But though Protagoras distinguishes these two claims, it is not clear where he has argued for anything more than the second. He has made a good case for his claim that the Athenians collectively inculcate, by formal instruction and informal habituation, the traits that they regard as virtues. But this amounts to teaching virtue only if one assumes that (a) what the Athenians do really counts as teaching, and (b) the traits that they inculcate are really virtues. If Protagoras makes these two assumptions without any defence, then he takes over the views of the many without examination; this is Plato's objection to the sophists in *Republic* vi.

To show that Protagoras, despite his appearance of sophistication, really accepts common beliefs uncritically, Socrates examines Protagoras' views on the virtues, and argues that Protagoras has no adequate defence on these points. The most serious objection becomes clear late in the dialogue, when the discussion has apparently travelled some distance from its starting-point. Protagoras asserts that it is impossible to know that X is better than Y and to choose Y over X (352c8–d3); on this point he agrees with Socrates, and dismisses the contrary view of the many (352e3–4). On the other hand, he insists that bravery is separable from the other virtues because he believes knowledge is insufficient for virtue (350c6–351b2). His beliefs turn out to be inconsistent.

Moreover, it is not clear how Protagoras ought to resolve this inconsistency in his beliefs. Apparently an easy way out would be to reject the Socratic view that knowledge of what is better necessitates the choice of what is better; in that case Protagoras could maintain his denial of the unity of the virtues. But if he denies the unity of the virtues, he raises difficulties for his claims about what the Athenians teach and what he teaches. He claims to teach his pupil good deliberation about both private and public affairs (318e5–319a2). Socrates interprets this claim as a promise to make people good citizens, and Protagoras accepts that interpretation (319a3–7). We might wonder why someone could not be able to deliberate well about public and private benefits while still being a bad citizen. Protagoras would

have an answer to this doubt if he could show that we cannot acquire one virtue without acquiring the others; and indeed his rather careless and imprecise remarks about the virtues that the Athenians teach suggest that he thinks they are inseparable. On the other hand, when the question is put directly to him, he insists that the virtues are separable.

These aspects of the argument of the *Protagoras* make a good commentary on Plato's claim in *Republic* vi that sophists simply repeat the views of the many without being able to defend them as true or reasonable. Protagoras claims that he can make his pupils believe that he has made them better people (328b1–c2). The argument of the dialogue suggests that Protagoras can make a good case for this claim, but cannot make such a good case for the claim that he really makes them better people; indeed Protagoras does not see that he needs to defend the second claim by arguments different from those that might support the first.

In discussing the *Protagoras* we have confined ourselves, as Plato does, to Protagoras' moral and political views. Nothing is said in the dialogue about the sophist's metaphysical or epistemological views. It is unlikely that Plato is unaware of these views, or that he intends the reader to ignore them altogether; for some passages in the dialogue, while they are quite intelligible in the context provided for them, are especially pointed and apposite if they allude to the sophist's general philosophical views.³⁰ None the less these views are not the focus of discussion.

Though Plato is aware of Protagoras' views on wider questions, he must believe that a particular line of argument against the sophist can be most effectively presented if it is developed on a relatively narrow front, focusing on moral and political issues. We can see why he might think it important to narrow his focus this way. For some defenders of Protagoras might argue that even if his general philosophical views are open to theoretical objections, this really makes no practical difference, since we can see that his moral arguments are reasonable in their own right. Plato meets these defenders of Protagoras on the ground that they have chosen, and he argues that their defence does not work.

The issues that are passed over in silence in the *Protagoras* are treated fully in the *Cratylus*, and especially in the *Theaetetus*. In these dialogues Plato takes up a defence of Protagoras that concedes the force of the criticisms in the *Protagoras*, but argues that these do not really touch Protagoras. In the *Protagoras* Socrates helps himself to the assumption that there are facts about the virtues that are logically independent of what Protagoras or the Athenians believe about the virtues, so that it is reasonable to ask whether the virtues recognized by Protagoras are genuine virtues or not. The Protagorean position developed in the *Theaetetus* argues that this common-sense assumption really cannot be defended; since there is no difference between its appearing to someone that P and P's being true, we cannot expect to find an account of how the virtues really are, as distinct from how they appear to someone.

It is unnecessary to examine the argument of the *Theaetetus* here; but it is relevant to point out how it confirms the general charge that the *Republic* presents against the sophists, that they basically take over common beliefs without any independent ground for accepting them. The *Theaetetus* examines a view that would reject the criticism in the *Republic* as the product of mistaken metaphysical

and epistemological assumptions. Plato does not suggest that all the sophists believe everything that he attributes to Protagoras in the *Theaetetus*; the dialogue is not a discussion of sophistic epistemology or metaphysics in general. He does not even suggest that the historical Protagoras had formulated all the doctrines that Plato attributes to him in the *Theaetetus*. But it does not follow that Plato is being unfair to Protagoras or to the other sophists. The position he examines is relevant to his criticism of the sophists, because it expresses what the sophists would have to say if they wanted to undermine the philosophical basis of Plato's criticism.

It would not be surprising if sophists tried to defend themselves in two ways against Socratic and Platonic criticism: (1) 'Theoretical criticism of our position is irrelevant; for our purpose is ethical and practical, to teach virtue.' (2) 'The objection that what we teach is not real virtue is indefensible, because it rests on the naïve view that there is a difference between real and apparent virtue.' These two defences are mutually inconsistent; for the first tries to keep the debate confined to moral and political questions, while the second raises broader philosophical questions to undermine criticisms based on moral and political grounds. But while the two defences are mutually inconsistent, each of them may seem attractive on its own, and it is reasonable for Plato to attack both.

So far, then, we have every reason to believe that the criticism in the *Republic* accurately represents Plato's view of the sophists, and that his examination of the leading sophist Protagoras expresses this same general view. If this is right, then Plato entirely separates the sophists from the moral and political doctrines of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos. The sophists, no doubt, are open to criticism because they avoid the critical examination of common moral beliefs that would (in Plato's view) both show us why these beliefs might lead us to be attracted by attacks on conventional other-regarding morality and show us what is wrong with the position of someone like Kallikles. But to say this against the sophists is not to say that they bear any significant degree of responsibility for the popularity of a view like Kallikles' view; the popularity of such views is explained, according to Plato, by defects in common beliefs that are not the product of sophistic teaching at all.

ERISTIC

We have considered the general attack on the sophists in the *Republic* and Plato's development of it in other dialogues. But we have so far set aside an important aspect of his view of the sophists. In the *Sophist* some of the suggestions about the nature of the sophist are familiar from early dialogues; but one description that is said to be especially revealing (232b3–6) is unfamiliar. The sophist is said to be a 'contradictor' or 'controversialist' (*antilogikos*) and a 'contentious arguer' (*eristikos*) (225a12–226a5). It is because the sophist can dispute on any subject whatever that he appears to know about everything (232e2–233d2), and this facility of the sophist in creating appearances leads into the logical and metaphysical section of the dialogue.

The suggestion that the sophist's trademark is appearance is familiar from the *Republic*, since the uncritical attitude to appearances (*eikasia*) is described in the

lowest division of the Divided Line, and clearly fits the description of sophistry. But the reader of the *Republic* is quite unprepared for the suggestion that sophistry is particularly connected with eristic and antilogic argument. Eristic and antilogic are mentioned in the *Republic*; their practitioners are said to be unable to distinguish eristic controversy from genuine dialectical discussion (454a1–9, 499a4–10). But Plato says nothing to suggest that the eristic attitude is especially characteristic of sophists.³¹

The *Euthydemus* gives a fuller picture of eristic. It is the type of argument practised by Euthydemus and Dionysodoros, who are recognized as sophists (271b9–c1, 277e3), and make the normal sophistic claim to be able to teach virtue (273d8–9). But their special skill is their ability to refute their opponent, no matter whether he says yes or no in answer to their initial question (275e4–6). The portrait of these eristics is not meant to be flattering, but it is not presented as a portrait of the sophists in general.

These facts about the presentation of eristic and sophistic persuaded Sidgwick that Plato's attitude to eristic changed. The *Protagoras* presents an especially difficult question. For Diogenes Laertius actually speaks of Protagoras as the founder of eristic (ix.52), and lists a work of Protagoras called 'The art of eristics, on wrestling' (ix.55), which Plato may allude to (*Sph.* 232d9–e1).³² This is rather surprising for readers of the *Protagoras*, and especially for Sidgwick:

For here he is not casually or slightly, but emphatically and prominently contrasted with Socrates, as the master of the opposite method of long speaking. It is true that he professes to be able to speak at any length that may be desired: but this is only a bit of his brag: it is quite clear that he cannot. The Elenchus is quite new to him, and he falls a most helpless victim to it. Now the coarsest satirist would not describe a man as quite unskilled in an art which he had himself invented.³³

Sidgwick infers that Protagoras cannot really have been known as a practitioner of eristic. In fact, according to Sidgwick, the eristic technique of cross-examination and refutation is so similar to the Socratic method that the eristics referred to in Plato must have been influenced by Socrates. If Sidgwick is right, then the historical Socrates did not develop his method in opposition to established practices of eristic argument; on the contrary, Plato denounced eristic only after he saw how it had been developed by people influenced by Socrates. Hence (Sidgwick concludes) the *Protagoras* and *Republic*, which see no connection between sophistic and eristic, are earlier than the *Euthydemus* and *Sophist*, which see a connection.

Sidgwick's argument may be strengthened if we consider Plato's views about the effects of eristic argument. In the *Republic* Plato acknowledges that if young men learn techniques of refutation, they enjoy practising them on everyone and everything, until they have undermined their previous moral convictions (538d1–539c8). In recognizing that Socratic cross-examinations may have this effect, Plato agrees with Socrates, who acknowledges that the young men who have listened to him tend to irritate other people by going round refuting them (*Ap.* 23c2–7). In the *Republic* he suggests that people who have had their ordinary moral beliefs undermined by destructive argument are more likely to accept the sorts of views presented by Kallikles (538d1–4, 538e5–539a4).

These Socratic techniques of examination and refutation are also characteristic of eristic. If Plato recognizes the bad moral effects of destructive argument, and if he believes that the sophists practise eristic, then he has a good reason for criticizing them as destructive influences on conventional morality. If he had wanted to connect the sophists with the views of Kallikles and Thrasymakhos, Plato could easily have pointed to the destructive effects of the sophists' practice of eristic. Since (as we have seen) he entirely fails to object to the sophists on these grounds in any of the ethical dialogues, it seems reasonable to infer that when he wrote the *Protagoras* and the *Republic*, Plato had not formed the view about the connection between sophistic and eristic that he had formed when he wrote the *Sophist*; and so we have a good reason for taking Sidgwick's view seriously.

This case for Sidgwick's conclusion, however, is inadequate, and if we see why it is inadequate we can confirm our previous conclusions about Plato's attitude to the influence of the sophists on morality. Sidgwick's case rests on the assumption that if Plato at the time he wrote the *Protagoras* had believed that Protagoras practised eristic, he would have presented him differently. This assumption, however, is open to question. We have already seen that in the *Protagoras* Plato refrains from opening a line of criticism that he develops in the *Theaetetus*, and that it is unjustified to infer that he would have discussed these views of Protagoras in the *Protagoras* if he had known about them. The same point applies to his silence about eristic. If we can see why it would not be relevant to Plato's purposes in the *Protagoras* to mention eristic, we need not be surprised by his silence.

A discussion of Protagorean metaphysics and epistemology would have diverted attention from Plato's main point in the *Protagoras*. The main point is that Protagoras' views on morality are clearly inadequate, even if we set aside any metaphysical and epistemological difficulties that Protagoras faces in maintaining them. Similarly, if Plato had focused on Protagoras' use of eristic, he would have distracted the reader from the main point. Plato focuses directly on Protagoras' conception of virtue; setting aside other aspects of the sophist's doctrine that might be open to criticism, he chooses to focus directly on what he takes to be the main flaw of Protagoras' outlook on morality. This is the flaw that he also emphasizes in *Republic* vi.

On this issue Plato cannot be accused of unfair bias against the sophists; indeed he forgoes a line of attack that he could legitimately have used. While Plato certainly believes it is vitally important to distinguish eristic from dialectic, and to expose the shortcomings of eristic, he does not want this issue confused with his objections to the sophists' attitude to conventional morality. He wants to highlight his main point that the sophists' attitude is uncritical.

If we can explain Plato's silence about eristic, can we explain his tendency, in the *Sophist*, to identify sophistic with eristic, or at least to treat eristic as especially characteristic of sophistic? If what we have said is right, it may seem unfair to identify the outlook of someone like Protagoras with the eristic outlook; for Plato is clearly well aware that there is more to Protagoras' teaching than training in the destructive techniques of eristic. However fair or unfair Plato's treatment of Euthydemus and Dionysodoros may be, it would be absurd to treat Protagoras the same way, and Plato must have recognized this. Must he, then, be distorting the outlook of many sophists in representing sophistic in general as eristic?

Plato's generalization is intelligible if we consider his view of the eristic outlook. The eristic outlook differs from the right outlook on argument not because the eristic's conclusions are all false, or because the arguments are unsound or invalid or without philosophical interest, but because of the eristic's aim. It is characteristic of the eristic to think of some arguments as ways of defeating the other side, by showing that an opponent must assent to the negation of what he initially took himself to believe. This is not the same as persuading the opponent of the falsity of his initial view; we can be quite confident in rejecting the conclusion we are forced into by eristic argument even though we see no way of evading the argument. While persuasive argument is the proper function of rhetoric, destructive arguments are for eristic. Eristic differs from rhetoric because it does not persuade us that a step in an argument is attractive or appealing; it seems to compel us to admit each step whether we find it attractive or not. By constructing an argument with some appearance of rigour the eristic seems to leave us no choice; and skill in constructing eristic argument consists in finding steps that the interlocutor will find compelling, however unattractive they may seem. Eristics are indifferent to fallacy because they do not care about whether an opponent really ought to find a step compelling; all they care about is whether it will in fact be found compelling.

The Presocratics are familiar with the difference between a merely specious and attractive argument and a genuinely rigorous and cogent argument.³⁴ Parmenides does not suppose that the steps of his argument about being are all initially plausible, but he believes we will see, when we think about it, that they are inevitable. That is why he tells us: 'Do not let habit, the result of much experience, force you to use an aimless eye and an ear and tongue with empty noises along this road, but judge by reason the hard-hitting refutation uttered by me'.³⁵ He tries to detach us from our initial sense of what is plausible and persuasive, so that we will see that we cannot avoid accepting his rigorous argument.

The Eleatics do not regard rigorous argument as incredible or unpersuasive; Parmenides insists that his way is 'the path of persuasion; for it attends on truth' (B2.4), and that there is no 'true confidence (*pistis*)' in general opinion (B1.30). When Zeno puts forward his rigorous arguments against plurality, he intends them to convince us that Parmenides is right to claim that plurality is impossible (Plato, *Parm.* 128c). This attitude to rigorous argument is not at all eristic; it is meant to prove the truth of the conclusion, not to win some argument. Plato suggests that Zeno practised 'contradicting argument' (*antilogia*), but not that he practised eristic (*Phdr.* 261d6–8).³⁶

Still, it is easy to see why someone might come to the conclusion that rigorous argument of the Eleatic sort does not really prove the truth of its conclusion. When the conclusion seems so outrageous, it is natural to conclude that the argument, however compelling it may have seemed, is not really very convincing. Hume remarks that Berkeley's arguments 'admit of no answer and produce no conviction',³⁷ and it is easy to have the same reaction to the Eleatic arguments that lead to counter-intuitive conclusions. This reaction may be strengthened if we can devise arguments that seem equally rigorous in support of contradictory conclusions.

This is the eristic view of rigorous argument. The eristic urges that there is nothing more to an ostensibly rigorous argument than the apparently compelling character

of the steps; and since we can construct apparently compelling arguments for contradictory conclusions, we have no reason to suppose that rigorous argument gives us a basis for believing one conclusion rather than its negation.

This is an important result for practitioners of less rigorous argument. From the austere Eleatic point of view, rhetoric, common sense, and arguments from traditional authority are unreliable products of thoughtless habit, leading to nonrational persuasion. This Eleatic preference for rigorous argument cannot be maintained, however, if it turns out that rigorous arguments ‘produce no conviction’ once we confront them with ostensibly rigorous arguments for contradictory conclusions. In that case we have nothing better than rhetorical argument to compare it with. We do not know for sure that Gorgias intended his readers to draw this conclusion from his treatment of Eleatic argument in ‘On Nature, or What is Not’; but it is a natural conclusion to draw.³⁸

If this is the eristic attitude to rigorous argument, does Protagoras share it? Some points in the *Protagoras* suggest unobtrusively that he does. He does not see the point of Socrates’ insistence on sincerity in the conduct of the *elenkbos*; he presents an irrelevant objection whose irrelevance is not easy to see (334a1–c6); and when he alleges an error in Socrates’ argument, it is not clear that he has identified it correctly (350c5–351b2).³⁹ Plato is not trying to present Protagoras as a fool or a charlatan; he simply suggests that Protagoras consistently expresses an eristic attitude to rigorous argument as a means to undermine the opponent’s position. Protagoras’ closing remarks express the same attitude; he congratulates Socrates on his skill in conducting the argument (361d7–e6), without accepting Socrates’ suggestion that it is worth thinking again about the issue that Socrates has raised. While Protagoras acknowledges that Socrates has mounted an ostensibly rigorous case for his view, he believes an ostensibly rigorous case can be mounted for all sorts of views, and that this is no reason for taking the views themselves seriously.

If this is the character of eristic argument, it would be reasonable for a particular sophist to engage both in eristic and some more constructive form of argument. Moreover, it is fair for Plato to argue that the sophists take an eristic attitude to rigorous argument, and we can even see him allude to this objection in the *Protagoras*. In that case, we need not suppose that he changes his mind about the nature of sophistic between the *Protagoras* and the *Sophist*. Indeed, we should now be able to see the connection between Plato’s main charge against the sophists—that, as he says in *Republic* vi, they simply reproduce common beliefs without critical examination—and his charge that they are eristics. For if the eristic attitude to rigorous argument is right, then we have no defensible point of view from which we can criticize common beliefs, and so no basis for objection to the sophists’ uncritical attitude.

This is the point on which Socrates and Plato firmly reject the eristic attitude. The Socratic *elenkbos* uses the materials of sophistic argument—the common-sense moral beliefs of ordinary people—but treats them as the materials of rigorous argument. Socrates follows Parmenides rather than Protagoras in supposing that there is a place for constructive, rigorous argument that cannot be answered by an equally rigorous argument on the other side; and he believes that an ordinary interlocutor who is sufficiently honest, reflective, and self-critical can be brought to see this and believe

it, not simply to concede it because he cannot think of a reply. In Plato's early dialogues Socrates professes this confidence in elenctic argument, and in the *Protagoras* Plato contrasts Socrates' attitude with Protagoras' attitude. It takes Plato some time, however, to formulate the distinctive features of Socratic argument. In the *Gorgias* he begins to explore the sense in which he believes Socratic arguments are 'rigorous', and not merely rhetorical and superficially attractive, but are none the less not eristic;⁴⁰ but the explicit contrast between dialectic and eristic does not appear until the *Meno* (75c8–d8). In the course of explaining what is crucial about Socratic argument Plato also formulates its crucial difference from sophistic argument. He carefully refrains from accusing the sophists of responsibility for the moral outlooks that he rejects; he does not want to divert the reader's attention from the vital difference that he sees.

NOTES

- 1 Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, tr. E.S.Haldane and F.H.Simson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1892), p. 369f.
- 2 Alexander Grant, *The Ethics of Aristotle* (4th edn, London: Murray, 1885), vol. 1, p. 76. His view is quoted and discussed by W.K.C.Guthrie, *The Sophists [=History of Greek Philosophy]*, vol. 3, part 1] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969), pp. 49, 164.
- 3 George Grote, *History of Greece* (2nd edn, London: Murray, 1851), ch. 67 (=vol. 8, p. 483).
- 4 Grote, p. 489.
- 5 Grote, p. 495.
- 6 See especially J.S.Mill, 'Grote's Plato', in *Collected Works*, vol. 11, ed. J.M.Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), pp. 375–440, at pp. 387–93. Mill had already expressed his agreement with Grote's view of the sophists, in his review of Grote's *History* (op. cit. pp. 307–37, at pp. 328f.). I have discussed Mill and Grote further in 'Mill and the classical world' in J.M.A.Skorupski (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Mill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).
- 7 Henry Sidgwick, 'The sophists', in *The Philosophy of Kant and Other Essays* (London: Macmillan, 1905), pp. 323–71. Reprinted from *Journal of Philology* 4 (1872), pp. 288–307, and 5 (1874), pp. 66–80. I will refer to pages of the reprint.
- 8 Guthrie, *Sophists*, p. 47.
- 9 E.A.Havelock, *The Liberal Temper in Greek Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 165.
- 10 Havelock, *Liberal Temper*, p. 161.
- 11 H.Lloyd-Jones, *The Justice of Zeus* (2nd edn, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), p. 135. On p. 248 Lloyd-Jones adds: 'Macleod reminds me that Plato thought the sophists who said this kind of thing openly were only bringing out what many ordinary people thought in secret.' But this does not lead him to qualify his earlier remark.
- 12 E.R.Dodds, 'The sophists and the failure of Greek liberalism', in *The Ancient Concept of Progress and Other Essays* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), p. 104.
- 13 J.de Romilly, *The Great Sophists in Periclean Athens* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 160.

- 14 J.Barnes, *The Presocratic Philosophers*, 2 vols (London: Routledge, 1979), vol. 2, p. 207.
- 15 I will not discuss questions about the meaning of the term '*sophistes*' in non-Platonic Greek, or about the social or professional status of the sophists. These questions are discussed by G.B.Kerferd, *The Sophistic Movement* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), chs 3–4, and by Guthrie, *Sophists*, ch. 3. I have given a brief account of some aspects of sophistic views in *Classical Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), ch. 5.
- 16 Aristophanes uses 'sophist' in an unfavourable, but indiscriminating sense (*Clouds* 331, 361, 1111, 1306) for natural philosophers and for experts in many areas, not only for the people who are called sophists in Plato's dialogues.
- 17 Aeschines, *In Timarchum* 174.
- 18 A connection between Antiphon's views and the oligarchic opposition to democracy becomes even more likely if Antiphon the sophist and Antiphon the oligarchic politician are the same person. The view that they are different people rests primarily on the misguided view that the fragments of the sophist's work express a 'liberal' or 'radical' view that could not have been held by an oligarch. On this question see J.S.Morrison, in R.K. Sprague (ed.), *The Older Sophists* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), pp. 109–11, Kerferd, *Sophistic Movement*, p. 50, de Romilly, *Great Sophists*, p. 130 (she denies, p. 127, that Antiphon is actually arguing for the rejection of conventional justice).
- 19 See the discussion between Alkibiades and Pericles in Xenophon, *Mem.* i.2.45.
- 20 See the passage from de Romilly quoted above.
- 21 I am assuming that *anthropous* is meant to be pejorative.
- 22 I do not believe there is sufficient evidence to suggest that Gorgias was a sophist. I follow E.R.Dodds, *Plato's Gorgias* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 7, against E.L.Harrison, 'Was Gorgias a sophist?', *Phoenix* 18 (1964), pp. 183–92, Guthrie, *Sophists*, p. 36, Kerferd, *Sophistic Movement*, p. 45. But whether or not he actually was a sophist, the most important point for our purposes is that the *Gorgias* neither describes him as a sophist nor attempts to connect his views with those of sophists.
- 23 The best evidence to show that Thrasymakhos was a sophist, and not simply a rhetorician, is his supposed epitaph, saying that his *teckne* was *sophia*; see DK 85 A 8. Since we do not know the date of this epitaph, it hardly justifies the confident assertion that Thrasymachos 'was a Sophist in the full sense' (Guthrie, *Sophists*, p. 295).
- 24 A.E.Taylor, *Plato: The Man and his Work* (London: Methuen, 1926), p. 490.
- 25 Aristotle does not suggest that Kallikles is a proponent of sophistic doctrine. This is well explained by Sidgwick, 'Sophists', pp. 365–7.
- 26 Kirk remarks: 'This is of course the well-known sophistic view, which may well have been read into Archelaus...in a misguided attempt to credit the teacher of Socrates with a decent minimum of ethical teaching' (G.S.Kirk, J.E.Raven and M.Schofield, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 389). Kirk refers to Diogenes Laertius' report that Arkhelaos had stimulated Socrates to study ethics; but he does not remark that this would be a curious doctrine to pick if one were trying to invent something for a teacher of Socrates to believe.
- 27 In his attack on Grote Cope appeals crucially to this passage in the *Laws*, claiming that the sophists are 'principally aimed at'. See E.M.Cope, 'The sophists', *Journal of Philology* 1 (1854), pp. 147–88, at pp. 155–8. It is not clear why Cope believes this, however, since he claims that the relevant doctrines are characteristic of some

- natural philosophers (he mentions Arkhelaos and Demokritos). Cope is well answered by Sidgwick, 'Sophists', p. 362f. On Plato's target see further J.Tate, 'On Plato, *Laus* 889cd', *CQ* 30 (1936), pp. 48–54.
- 28 Sidgwick is also referring to Aristotle's remarks about natural and conventional justice in *EN* v.7, which give equally little support to the view that the division between natural and conventional is especially sophistic.
- 29 Sidgwick, 'Sophists', p. 362.
- 30 See perhaps 334a3–c6, 356c8–d4. There is some dispute about the relation between the views attributed to Protagoras in the *Protagoras* and those in the *Theaetetus*, and the dispute is complicated by differences in views of Protagoras in the *Theaetetus*. See G.Vlastos, introduction to *Plato's Protagoras*, ed. G.Vlastos (New York: Bobbs Merrill, 1956), pp. xvii–xxiv; C.C.W.Taylor, *Plato's Protagoras* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 83f., 100–3, 191.
- 31 On eristic see also *Phdr.* 261d, *Euthd.* 275c, *Lys.* 216a, *Tht.* 167e, *Phil.* 17a, Isokrates, *c. Soph.* 20, *Antid.* 45. Questions about the relation between eristic and antilogic are discussed by Kerferd, *Sophistic Movement*, ch. 6, and by A.Nehamas, 'Eristic, antilogic, sophistic, dialectic', *History of Philosophy Quarterly* 7 (1990), pp. 3–16. A useful survey of Plato's views on eristic is given by E.S.Thompson, *Plato's Meno* (London: Macmillan, 1901), pp. 272–85.
- 32 Diogenes Laertius actually lists these as two titles, but it has often been suggested that 'The art of eristics' is the literal, and 'on wrestling' the metaphorical description of the book (Thompson, *Meno*, p. 276). The suggestion is made more plausible by the fact that the same metaphor appears in 'The overthrowing arguments', the alternative title for Protagoras' 'On Truth' (Sextus, *AM* vii 60=DK 80 B 1). For the metaphor see also Demokritos, DK 68 B 125.
- 33 Sidgwick, 'Sophists', p. 340.
- 34 I have said a bit more about different attitudes to rigorous argument in 'Coercion and objectivity in Plato's dialectic', *RIPh* 40 (1986), pp. 49–74.
- 35 Parmenides, DK 28 B 7.3–5. For 'hard-hitting', see D.J.Furley, 'Notes on Parmenides', in E.N.Lee, A.P.D.Mourelatos and R.M.Rorty (eds), *Exegesis and Argument* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1973), pp. 1–15, at p. 9. Barnes, *Presocratics*, vol. 1, p. 170, has 'much-contending'. Kirk, Raven and Schofield, *Presocratic Philosophers*, p. 248, have 'strife-encompassed'. My translation takes *echeessan* with both *akouen* and *glossan*, suggesting a reference to speaking and hearing, and hence presumably to the arguments that appeal to common sense; in that case, *omma* refers to the evidence of the senses and *akouen* and *glossan* to testimony. It is possible, however, that *echeessan* goes only with *akouen*; in that case the lines probably refer to the senses of sight, hearing, and taste. See A.P.D.Mourelatos, *The Route of Parmenides* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970), p. 77n.; Barnes, *Presocratics*, p. 295.
- 36 Vlastos, 'Plato's testimony concerning Zeno of Elea', *JHS* 95 (1975), pp. 136–62, at pp. 153–5, rightly takes this passage to imply that Plato distinguishes antilogic from eristic. See also Kerferd, *Sophistic Movement*, pp. 61–5.
- 37 Hume, *Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. L.A.Selby-Bigge (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1902), xii, Part 1, p. 155n.
- 38 See DK 82 B 3. If this is part of the point of Gorgias' essay, then it is not necessary to reach a definite decision about whether it is a serious philosophical argument or a satirical rhetorical exercise. It has a serious point if it shows that, as Isocrates puts it, 'it is easy to devise a deceptive argument on any subject you choose' (*Helen* 4). Isocrates mentions Protagoras, Gorgias, Zeno, and Melissos, and alludes to Socrates

and to those who (like Euthydemus and Dionysodoros) claim that false statement and contradiction are impossible. He treats all these indiscriminately as examples of ostensibly rigorous argument exploited in eristic disputation (*he peri tas eridas philosophia*, 6).

39 This passage is fully discussed by C.C.W.Taylor, *Plato's Protagoras*, pp. 150–61.

40 I have said something about the *Gorgias* in 'Coercion and objectivity in Plato's dialectic'.

PLATO ON WOMEN IN THE LAWS



T.J.Saunders

Despite all his professed intentions in the *Laws* to emancipate women and make full use of the talents he was now convinced they had, Plato's reintroduction of the family has the direct effect of putting them firmly back into their traditional place.

(Okin 1979:50)

it seems legitimate to conclude that in Plato's state [in the *Laws*] women were expected, indeed required, to participate in all aspects of political and civic life.

(Cohen 1987:37)

On women, Plato in his *Laws* speaks with forked tongue and in double paradox. Sometimes he asserts, in ringing and comprehensive terms, that women are to enjoy partnership and even equality with men; yet some of the major institutions of his state are clearly constructed on the assumption that they will not. Conversely, many disparaging remarks in the best (or worst) tradition of Greek male chauvinist piggery sit oddly with some other major institutions, in which women clearly do enjoy such equality.

Such a confused state of affairs naturally lends itself to sharply varying interpretations, as the opening quotations indicate. Unfortunately, most of the many examinations of the topic I have seen fail to marshal every pertinent text; and if this chapter does nothing else, it will, I hope, achieve completeness in at least that respect. Moreover, few of them compare Platonic law, and social and political practice, with historical law and practice in sufficiently close detail over a sufficiently wide range of topics;¹ but that is essential, if we are to assess the direction in which Plato is moving: one ought not to pore over his text in isolation. Finally, no previous commentator has fully appreciated and taken into account the subtlety of the practical political strategy Plato adopts for the purposes of Magnesia, the second-best state depicted, in all its dizzy detail, in his last and longest work.

Magnesia is startlingly different from Kallipolis, the Utopia of the *Republic*. The Philosopher-Kings and Philosopher-Queens, and their untrammelled personal rule over society, have disappeared. Instead, the state is administered by the citizens themselves, under an elaborate and comprehensive code of civil, constitutional and criminal law. There are precisely 5,040 of them; each farms a portion of land, his

‘estate’ (*kleros*), where he has his house, his wife, family and slaves. What, then, is the social, political and legal status of Magnesian wives, and indeed of other free citizen women in the state?

Let us first listen to the flourish of trumpets, to the clarion-calls for female equality. The most sensational is a long one, from 804d to 806c. Plato has been discussing cultural and military education. Attendance at school, he has said (804d), should be compulsory for all children. We now read that not only should ‘all’ be taken to include females,² but that this sharing in education, particularly military education, is to be broadened to embrace ‘other things’ also (805c7). Plato explains that only thus can the state harness all its energies (805ab). There then follows after this passage a discursive review of the deficient practices of several states, including Athens (805d ff.).

We need to look closely at Plato’s terminology. He describes the arrangement he wants as a *koinonia*, a ‘sharing’ or ‘partnership’. The word does not in itself entail *equality*, even if the sharing is to be in the ‘whole of life’.³ Nevertheless, his whole policy applies across the board to female children as well as to male: the former’s training must be ‘the same’ (804d6, 805a7) and ‘equal’ (804e1). That is explicit, and apparently unambiguous; but even these words can be treacherous: I may have the same meal as you, but my portions may be bigger. And how much can we read into ‘other things’? Political and legal rights, for instance? The text does not say ‘all’ other things; and there is the restriction of the words *boti malista* (805c7–d1), which do not mean ‘total’ sharing, but merely ‘to the maximum extent possible’.⁴ Something, it seems, stands in the way of a *complete* partnership. What is it?

At 770c7–d6 Plato explains that the aim of legislation is the ‘virtue (*arete*) of soul proper to man (*anthropos*)’, which is attainable by both male and female ‘nature’, *phusis*. No distinction of quality or merit is drawn between the two: they seem to be on an equal footing.⁵ But there is the same lurking uncertainty. It would not be inconsistent with the wording of the text to suppose that female nature is inferior to male, and that an inferior social and institutional position is either necessary or sufficient to ensure that women attain the ‘virtue of soul proper to man’, in the sense of mankind; the virtue itself would be the same in either case, but a woman would simply achieve less of it.⁶ At any rate, the perfection of female virtue, as well as of male, must certainly be an object of care to the legislator.⁷

That Plato does believe that female nature is in general inferior to male is at first sight obvious, not just from a series of slighting references to women scattered throughout the *Laws*,⁸ but from one explicit statement (781a2–b4). The context is a complaint that Spartan and Cretan legislators have not forced women to take part in communal meals (*sussitia*); for that would have forced them to abandon their life of secretiveness and obscurity, and to live an open and public life in common with men. The passage seems more sociological than essentialist. Women are shifter than men, because of ‘weakness’ (*asthenes*: cf. *Rep.* 451e); that is to say, they cannot attain their ends as men do, by strength, and so have to resort to deceit. Yet there is no necessary implication that females are *born* trickier than males: the lofty statement that the female *phusis* is less good than the male ‘with respect to/for purposes of acquiring virtue’ (*pros areten*), may only mean that for physical and sociological reasons, in states less good than Magnesia is to be, women *acquire* a *phusis* that

militates against the attainment of virtue. If Plato means that *all* women in *any* circumstances are less virtuous than men, he could hardly say, as he does at 805ab, that if they had the same lifestyle as men, the state could double its achievement (cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1260b19 ff., *Rhet.* 1361a8 ff.); for simple arithmetic would be against him. But probably that is to press a rhetorical flourish.

A perhaps more essentialist view occurs in the regulations for music (802e). Musical styles must be different for the two sexes, for there is a *natural* difference between them; courage and highmindedness are characteristic of the male, modesty and decorum of the female. Another passage⁹ simply distinguishes nature from habits, and says that boys and girls must not ruin the former by the latter.

So far, then, we have statements of principle that argue for equality, but are not unambiguous, and are hedged, probably because of a certain view of women's innate and/or acquired *phusis*.

We now move to 785b2–9, another statement of principle, but of a quite different kind. This is Cohen's star exhibit. In a list of brief prescriptions regarding age-limits for males and females for various functions, Plato says, baldly: 'for offices, for a woman forty years, for a man thirty years'. That is, for a Magnesian woman, life begins at forty; for that is when she may begin to hold office.¹⁰ On the face of it, despite the high age-qualification, this is tremendous; for in Greek states in general women had no such political rights, though they held certain religious offices (on which, in Athens, see Gould 1980:50–1). If Plato does mean that forty-year-old women may hold political office in Magnesia unrestrictedly, then at one blow he has enormously extended the range of female activity (cf. Morrow 1960:167–8). His provision would entail that a woman of that age is qualified not only to hold office herself after a process of lot-taking or election or both, but also to vote to elect others, both male and female. She would be entitled to act as a juror in any kind of case, both private and political, and to take a full part in the highest councils of the state, becoming a member of the *boule* (council), *ekklesia* (assembly), the Board of thirty-seven Guardians of the Laws (the chief executive officials) and presumably even of the Nocturnal Council, the supreme governing body.

Yet here again matters may not be as they seem. True, there is no hint in the text that the offices to be held by women are different in kind or number from those to be held by men: the single occurrence of the word *arkhai*, offices, suffices for both. But in that case it is very strange that Plato makes no parade of the innovation. Elsewhere, when introducing an extension of the range of activity permitted to or required of females (in education, and in the provision of common meals for them), he takes a lot of time to prepare the ground. Is it likely that he would prescribe such a phenomenal enlargement of women's rights in such a casual manner? Many have found it incredible that Plato is writing a 'blanket' regulation; they accordingly interpret 'offices' to mean not 'any' office, but 'such offices as women may hold'. Some support for this view may be found in the fact that only a page or so before Plato has legislated for female officials who have the duty of entering homes and supervising the welfare of marriages;¹¹ and in the rest of the *Laws* there are several other minor offices explicitly or impliedly to be held by women.¹² It may be that these, and these only, are what Plato means.¹³

However, Cohen has also an indirect argument to show that women are politically

active in Magnesia. At 753b4 ff. Plato lays down the procedure for the election of the 37 Guardians of the Laws. All those 'partake' in the election who are serving in the infantry or cavalry, or who have 'partaken' in war while young and strong. One wonders what the 'partaking' here has to do with the 'partnership' in the long statement of policy at 804d ff. The word is the same, *koinonia/ein*; but it would be hard to build much on that. Nor can any weight be put on the promulgation of nominees to 'the whole city' at 753d1. And of course the masculine grammatical terminations used throughout tell us nothing either: for in grammar as in life the male embraces the female. Cohen's central claim is that since women do form part of the Magnesian army, they must be supposed to take part in the election of the Guardians of the Laws; and if that, then presumably they can *be* Guardians, and indeed *a fortiori* fill any other office too. He assumes, I take it, that Plato when composing this passage did not just write in standard terms, without even thinking of women, but had it clearly in his mind that much later on in the *Laws* he would be including women in the army—and nevertheless, quite deliberately, refrained from excluding them from the election of the Guardians.

But *does* Plato include women in the army? In the central policy statement (804d ff.) he certainly requires them to receive equestrian training, as well as to go in for athletics, and holds up Sarmatian women, who ride horses and use weapons, as models of female conduct; and he commends the Amazons too, for their 'sharing in' (*koinonein*, 806b1) the deployment of weapons. He criticizes Thrace and Athens for unduly confining women to manual or domestic tasks, and remarks that even in Sparta women 'do not partake in things of war' (*koinonein*, 806a5); hence in an emergency they could not resist the enemy, or at least frighten him by being seen in battle array (806b4–5). This last remark seems to envisage a *restricted* military role for women.

These statements are, however, of policy; they are not precise regulations. 813e3–814c4 tells us that girls and women must undergo the full range of military training; but here too there is some restriction. The Greek is not utterly clear; but it seems that Plato wants the female role in battle to be the defence of their state/city and their children, *not* joining expeditions as part of the regular army, which may have to abandon the state/city and fight abroad. We note 'capable of at least this much' in 814a5, and 'up to this point at least' in c2–3.¹⁴ Nevertheless, 'even in the opposite situation' (a5), when a foreign army invades the country, women should be able to fight for their children; but this requirement is expressed indirectly, in a selective analogy from the animal world (female birds fight to defend their chicks). Two situations seem therefore to be envisaged: (i) when the male army fights abroad (cf. 737d), the women are to be left at home as a defensive garrison; (ii) when there is an invading army, *then* they are to fight alongside the men (cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1269b36–9). Women seem therefore to be an important back-up, rather than the first to be deployed.

Several other passages tell us more about military training. At 829b2–7 Plato prescribes that men, women and children are to attend military field-days or 'expeditions' (*strateuesthai*) at least once a month; the regulation applies explicitly to women, and to children. Provided they are licensed on the strength of personal merit by the Guardians of the Laws, both men and women may compose eulogies of

those whose conduct on the field-days or in ordinary life has been exemplary; and in these compositions they are to enjoy 'freedom of speech' (*parrhesia*).¹⁵ The implication must be that women are good judges of military matters, as well as capable composers of poetry and prose.

At 833c4–d6 Plato describes that form of military training which consists in running races. All competitors are to run with weapons; but certain abatements of distance are made for youths and boys. Girls are confined to the stadium; till thirteen, the age when puberty begins, they are to run naked (or 'unarmed'); from then till eighteen or twenty they must be suitably clothed (or possibly 'carrying suitable equipment'¹⁶). Presumably these regulations have regard to prudence as well as to a presumed relative weakness of the feminine physique. A further brief regulation¹⁷ states that the 'same' rules for contests in armour are to apply equally to women as to males; but the women have to be below the age of marriage.

At 834d3–7 Plato allows women, but does not compel them, to share in (*koinonein*) horse-riding. It specifies 'girls and young women whose nature (*phusis*), as a result of previous training which has got them into the habit,¹⁸ allows it and does not revolt from it'. I suppose Plato means the sort of young female we would call a tomboy.

At 794c6–d3 Plato permits a further and more sweeping abatement. He prescribes that after the age of six boys and girls should be segregated for the purpose of education. The boys should be sent to teachers of riding, archery, javelin-throwing and slinging. The same applies to the girls, 'if they are in some way willing, at least up to the point of learning' (or 'at least the lessons').¹⁹ I take it that Plato recognizes that girls of the age of six-plus may be too apprehensive to take part in archery etc. (cf. 792b ff.); nevertheless, as at 834d3–7, he allows for tomboys, while not pressing the point in other cases. 'At least up to the point of learning' probably distinguishes this very early stage of instruction from participation in the monthly field-days, which are suitable only for teenagers and adults.

Both military training and military service are therefore to be required of women, though their training is abated in some respects, and their combat role is primarily defensive and limited to the domestic theatre. But at what age is a woman expected to serve? Men serve from twenty to sixty (785b). Women are expected to marry between sixteen and twenty, and their training in running is to last only till eighteen or twenty (833d). It would be reasonable to suppose that at this stage they could be required to take the field. However, 785b states that whatever military service may be required of women, when they have borne children, should be up till the age of fifty; a practical and proper role for each (age?)-group (*hekastais*) is to be allocated. At first sight this means that women are *exempted* from military service during their period of childbearing, say from their late teens until forty or forty-five. That would indicate an effective period of military service of only five or ten years, down to the age of fifty. As Susan Okin (1979:49) scornfully remarks, that is 'no way to produce Amazons'. Conceivably, however, childbearing could be over by twenty-five: Plato requires his Magnesians married couples to produce a minimum of only two children (and he is clearly worried about their possible reluctance to breed).²⁰ On the other hand, as Okin points out, the absence of contraceptives implies a longer period of childbearing; and the rate of infant mortality is obviously relevant.

Yet I wonder if 785b really does imply that the period of childbearing is empty of military service. That period is after all the period of physical maturity and strength—precisely what is needed for fighting. To judge from the animal analogy in 814ab, mother-birds fighting for their chicks, Magnesian mothers would be expected to fight for their offspring. The discussion at 785b would then indicate only that until the end of childbearing women perform the military role for which they have been trained—defensive duties within Magnesia—and then, when they are past their physical prime, they are to undertake ‘practical and suitable’ duties, presumably lighter ones. At about this age, forty, they will be relatively free of domestic commitments; and they will also have developed (Plato might argue) a sufficient mental, emotional and social maturity (by virtue of living a public life by partaking in the common meals) to hold major public office.²¹

The period of childbearing, and therefore of maximum commitment to domestic duties, seems crucial in other ways too. Susan Okin (1979:48) points out a series of apparently deliberate exclusions of women at that stage of life, namely from

- (i) competitions in dancing and other cultural activities (764e), and in running (833cd), in armed combat (834a), and in horse-racing (834d);
- (ii) civic processions at the funerals of the scrutineers (947b–d).²²

Some of these we have noticed already; and there is clearly a consistent pattern: women of this age are expected to stay at home. How far is this expectation consistent with the grand policy statements, and with, for example, the requirement of 829b, to engage at least once a month in military field-days, come rain come shine?

At this point, let us revisit 753b–d. For women’s military role is not just important in itself: it seems crucial for discovering whether they are to hold public offices on a fully regular basis, as distinct from the minor ones specifically allocated to them. Do the military duties I have recounted satisfactorily fulfil the requirements for participation in the election of the Guardians of the Laws? The purpose of the qualification, ‘having partaken in war while young and strong’, I take to be simply the inclusion of veterans: men after the age of sixty, possibly women older than fifty (cf. 755c). But do women meet the other qualification, ‘serving in the cavalry or infantry’? Given the military training I have described, it is hard to see why not, so far as the words go: perhaps Magnesia has few if any cavalrywomen, but ‘or infantry’ would suffice. But the words are not decisive. There is no evidence that at this early stage in the description of Magnesia’s constitutional law Plato had women in mind at all. It is only over fifty Stephanus pages later that the question of their status is raised explicitly. The arrangements for the election of generals and other military officers are also utterly silent about women (755b ff.).

One possible explanation is that Plato never even doubted their inclusion. He knew that later on he would devote much space to arguing for the fullest possible equality of women with men in the whole range of activities that make up the social and public life of Magnesia, and simply left his readers and his Magnesians to put the texts together in the way Cohen has put them together. Alternatively, it may simply never have occurred to him that they *could* be put together like that. He may have assumed that *of course* women do not hold major public office, and taken it for

granted that no Magnesian or anyone else would expect it; in other words, he may be acting quite thoughtlessly, on an unconscious deep-seated cultural assumption. But I doubt it. Plato challenged all sorts of deep-seated cultural assumptions, notably about women, as both the *Republic* and the *Laws* amply testify. Perhaps he did have some precise intention concerning office-holding by women; but if so, it is teasingly elusive.

Let us look at one further ambiguity, in yet another text that at first blush admits of no doubt. At 765de Plato prescribes that the most important of the high officials of the state, the Minister of Education, has to be a father of legitimate children; being a mother, it seems, will not do. It is equally consistent with the text to suppose (i) that Plato assumes that all high offices will be held by men, and that this one office is singled out, for obvious reasons, for the tighter requirement that they be fathers also, and of legitimate children at that; or (ii) that he assumes all high offices may, with this one crucial exception, be held by women or men indifferently. Supposition (i) looks to me the more likely; but in this case is Plato's assumption conscious or careless? And when he says a little later (766b) that the Minister is to be elected by 'all' the officials, except the Council and Prytanies, and uses for the electors the word 'each' in the masculine, *bekastos*, is he thinking of males only? Or does he mean to include the holders of those offices that are reserved to women, e.g. the inspectorships of marriages?

We seem to have reached the point at which you pay your money and you take your choice: psychologize Plato one way, and you get one answer, in another, another. But matters are not that desperate. For there are many important social and legal matters in which Plato makes his intentions perfectly plain.

Having married between the ages of sixteen and twenty, as 785b prescribes, the young Magnesian woman takes her place in the household of one of the 5,040 citizens, or in that of the designated male heir to one of the 5,040 estates.²³ On the face of it, she lives quite ordinarily, as a farmer's wife; and it is clear that she will have the ordinary matrimonial and domestic duties and powers.²⁴ Like all married couples in Magnesia, she and her husband earn their livelihood not from commerce but from agriculture.²⁵ As compared with her Athenian sister, the Magnesian woman lives a pretty public life:²⁶ she has regular military practice, and the duty to attend the common meals for women, a practice which Plato goes to considerable trouble to justify, on the grounds that a secluded life in private encourages all sorts of undesirable practices that escape control by the legislator.²⁷ And as we have seen, the wife will be expected, when she reaches forty, to hold office, certainly minor ones and perhaps major ones too. In matters public, Plato's treatment of women is decidedly innovative.

What of matters private? What is a woman's economic and legal position? Just as in Athens, she is in the power of a *kurios*, 'controller', normally her father or husband. She is in some attenuated sense a piece of property: a man can say 'my wagon, my house, my slave, my wife'—but of course his rights over these things vary: as Aristotle noted in the *Politics*, possessive adjectives are slippery things.²⁸ Susan Okin's central thesis,²⁹ that private wives and private families are part and parcel of Plato's (reluctant) toleration of private property in the *Laws*, is true enough.³⁰ But we ought not to interpret the word 'private' too baldly: Plato certainly does not intend Magnesian husbands to regard their wives as chattels—or slaves (see 805de). It is true, however,

that Magnesian women lack an independent right to own property (but so too did Athenian women). (Cf. de Ste. Croix (1970), Schaps (1979) esp. 91–2.)

Nevertheless, there are several measures which confer on Magnesian women a securer status, and more discretion in the running of their lives, than were enjoyed by women in Athens. Let us examine closely some of the small print of Plato's regulations.

(1) The betrothal,³¹ *engue*, of a Magnesian woman, as of an Athenian, was arranged by her *kurios*, normally her father. Formally, she seems in neither place to have had much say in the matter (though no doubt informal means, such as tantrums, were available if her father's choice of husband displeased her); certainly Plato's instructions for the finding of marriage-partners are written very largely from the male point of view (note particularly 772d ff.). But there are five ways in which Plato safeguards the interests of women also.

(i) He draws up public criteria for the choice, based on firm social policies, in an attempt to disentangle it from undesirable economic constraints and motivation, and from self-indulgent personal preferences. Rich should not marry rich, nor poor poor (cf. Theognis 183–6); the headstrong ought not to ally with the headstrong, but with the phlegmatic. *Mixing* of wealth and character is the key (cf. *Politicus* 310b ff.). Now you may think this substitutes a state tyranny for a paternal one; but Plato's aim is obviously to produce marriages that are harmonious and stable.³² However, he declines actually to legislate on the matter, and leaves it to social pressure.

(ii) Part of the process of selection of partners consists of dancing, naked girls with naked youths, provided of course that restraint is shown on both sides (cf. 835de); and the text explicitly states that the males are to 'inspect and be inspected'. Now clearly there can be little point in allowing a young woman to inspect multiple young men if her resulting preferences are in principle to be discounted, however bizarre the procedure may seem.³³

(iii) When a father dies absolutely intestate, and leaves only daughters, the law provides that the one who is 'heiress' to his *kleros* (she is called *epikleros*, 'attached' to it) should be married (as in Athens) to one of the deceased father's male relatives.³⁴ The criteria are closeness of kinship (a long sequence of such relatives is set out) and the security of the estate, which is taken by the husband along with the woman. Again, there is to be an inspection of the males naked (females only half-naked), though this time by a 'judge/assessor' (*dikastes*). Plato declines to prescribe the manner of doing what he says a father would have done, i.e. select from among all the citizens a bridegroom personally compatible with the bride; such matters, he says, resist investigation. Hence the two more mechanical criteria, closeness of kinship and the security of the estate, are the only two that apply; and obviously the girl herself has no option but to acquiesce (subject to (iv) below). However, in the case when *none* of the prescribed males are available (they may, after all, be married already³⁵), she is allowed, in consultation with her guardians, to choose any citizen as her husband (provided he does not object), or even someone living in one of Magnesia's colonies. A pretty vestigial personal choice, you may think; but it did not exist in Athens, and Plato did not have to allow it: he could easily have left the choice to the girl's guardians alone.³⁶

(iv) However, these apparently insensitive and inflexible regulations are followed

immediately by the humane recognition that sometimes matches made in accordance with the rules would be disastrous; law is after all a blunt instrument. Accordingly, there is a procedure under which *either* party, the man or the woman, may in view of physical or mental defect in the other, swear that the lawgiver, if alive now, would never require the marriage; and even in the face of opposition from relatives or guardians, the Guardians of the Laws may at their discretion dispense the two persons from the obligation. Here again the two sexes have exactly the same privilege.³⁷

(v) A similar worry seems to lie behind the rather complex rules prescribing who is to perform the *engue* in normal circumstances, i.e. when the choice of husband is open (not laid down by law, as in (iii) above). Athenian law prescribed that the right belonged first to a girl's father, then to her brother by the same father, and failing him to the father's father.³⁸ Plato's law is different.³⁹ In the absence of the father the grandfather acts, and only in his absence does a brother act; Gernet⁴⁰ suggests that this minor variation is intended to strengthen the interest of the male line. But Plato innovates, as Gernet notes, by providing that in the absence of both these two, the same relatives on the *mother's* side in the same order are empowered to act; probably⁴¹ that would include the mother herself. If by some unusual mischance even these are lacking, the nearest relatives must act in association with the girl's guardians. This sensible provision to deal with an extreme case seems not to have applied in Athens, where—to judge from some obscure wording in Demosthenes, XLVI.18—the matter was settled not by family consultation but by some kind of public procedure (possibly involving the *arkhon*: see Harrison 1968:19–20).

The effect of this elaborate series of possibilities is to keep the *engue* firmly in the family, including relatives on the mother's side; and part of Plato's motivation, I suggest, is a desire to avoid recourse to public rules and procedures for as long as possible, under which the finding of a husband could well be done less sensitively.

The general tendency of (1) (i)–(v) is to enlarge somewhat the area of discretion open to females, and to afford them in some circumstances a protection and privilege equal to that of men.

(2) There is a similar tendency in the law about dowries, which are forbidden absolutely.⁴² Their absence will not prevent the poor from giving and receiving in marriage, since no one in Magnesia will fall below the minimum level of wealth required for a modest standard of living; hence no one will feel compelled to marry for economic reasons, and the social criteria described above for the choice of partner may then prevail unimpeded. The restriction on the money that may be spent on a *trousseau*⁴³ is similarly intended to disinfect marriage of monetary considerations, and allows the personal compatibility of the prospective partners to function as a major criterion. But Plato also says, disagreeably, that the absence of dowries will mean that wives will be less able to lord it over their husbands; presumably a husband will no longer have to tremble at the prospect of his wife bringing about a divorce and going back to her original family, which would require the return of the dowry. To that extent, the cutting of the dowry-link with her family is not advantageous to the woman.

(3) On the other hand, she has (in academic terms) a sort of 'tenure', because her husband cannot simply dismiss her, as he could in Athens. For a state policy also regulates divorce,⁴⁴ which in Athens was a largely private matter, in which either

partner could take the initiative (though the necessity to return the dowry must have been a constraint: the husband might be unwilling to give it up, and the wife's former *kurios* could be reluctant to accept her back if he could not get it). But in Magnesia, divorce is envisaged in two circumstances only:

(i) When the marriage is childless after ten years. The relatives and the female supervisors of marriage must be called in to arrange terms which will safeguard the interests of *both* parties; if there are difficulties, ten Guardians of the Laws must make a final decision.

(ii) When the marriage breaks down because of incompatibility of temperament. If the supervisors of marriage and ten Guardians of the Laws fail to reconcile the couple, divorce and if possible remarriage should be arranged; if there are no children or only a few, the remarriages must have procreation in view; if there are sufficient children already, the remarriages should encourage companionship and mutual help in old age. These humane provisions appear to treat both partners on an equal footing.

So too, broadly, do the provisions for remarriage on the death of the partner. A widow with children is not allowed, as she was in Athens, to return to her original family: she has to stay where she is and bring them up, remarrying if she is thought to be too young to live healthily without a husband.⁴⁵ A widower is advised to bring up his children without remarrying; but if he has none, remarriage is obligatory.⁴⁶

The obligation to marry, and much of the legislation about divorce, is obviously concerned with ensuring a supply of children. Marriage is subject to a firm social policy; and the unions have a far greater intention of permanence built into them than in Athens. By abolishing the economic ties between the woman and her original family, Plato leaves her, in some limited circumstances, a fuller and more independent person.

(4) If (when there is no question of divorce) the lack of children is held to be culpable, presumably because of illicit sexual liaisons on the part of one spouse or both, various social exclusions apply, broadly the same for offenders of either sex (784c–e1). These penalties apply also, and again to both offenders, for adultery when one party has produced children as required by law, but the other is still at the stage of begetting them (784e). If the period of childbearing is over for both, the offence attracts simply disrepute for both.

The law at Athens was strikingly different.⁴⁷ It paid no attention to age, nor to the presence or absence of children. A husband who discovered his wife had committed adultery was obliged to divorce her, and she suffered various public humiliations. A male adulterer was not correspondingly at risk from his wife; but the husband of his paramour could exact compensation, or prosecute him, or, if he caught him in the act, kill him with impunity himself or (perhaps) haul him off to officials for summary execution or a regular trial later.

The mildness of the Magnesian penalties is all of a piece with Plato's policy of leaving sexual offences to be controlled largely by social pressure.⁴⁸ The policy brings with it a striking equality of treatment of the sexes.

(5) On the other hand, Plato's law of rape *may* (it is hard to be sure) be more severe than the Athenian, where perhaps only double damages were payable.⁴⁹ (Yet it is hard to believe that rape could not be punished by death in Athens—either

summarily by the husband or officials, or under the suit (*graphe*) for adultery (*moicheia*) or *hubris*.) At any rate, Plato allows the rapist to be killed with impunity by the victim, or by her father, brother or husband; for violence is something he is at particular pains to repress throughout his code (864c). However, the impunity does not extend to other persons.

(6) Some further modest enlargement of a woman's legal rights and responsible public role are found at 937a. Provided she is over forty (the crucial age again), she may (i) act as a witness (*martus*) in court, and as a *sunegoros*, speaker in support of a litigant. In Athenian courts she probably was not allowed to act as a witness at all.⁵⁰ She may also (ii) bring a suit, provided she has no husband. In Athens, she had always to be represented by her *kurios*, whoever he was. The effect of the innovation is to sweep away that general requirement for forty-year-olds, save in a single case, i.e. when there is a husband. The widowed or divorced woman who does not remarry is in legal matters mistress of her own affairs.

A thought occurs: if a woman of forty enjoys this discretion to bring a suit only if unmarried, is it plausible to suppose, as Cohen has claimed, that she would be allowed, whether married or not, to hold major public office, which necessarily entails the day-by-day exercise of discretion which is not only large but extra-familial? That would be a huge increase in the confidence Plato seems to feel in the female sex. On the other hand, if to bear witness is 'a socio-political act of support' (see n. 50), then the licence to do so after the age of forty suggests that after that age Magnesian women are indeed active socio-politically, and would therefore naturally hold major public office. After all, socio-political life in Magnesia is not intended to be the cut-throat thing that it was in Athens.⁵¹

(7) Perhaps the most striking area in which women are placed on an exactly equal footing with men is penology. Punishments in the *Laws* are differentiated sociologically, in a variety of complex ways. In general, Plato assumes that the higher the social class, the higher the degree of reason and virtue in the offender, and hence the lower the level of penalty required; hence citizens are commonly punished less severely than foreigners, and free persons less severely than slaves (see Saunders 1991:334–8). So, since Plato believes the female nature has less potential for virtue than the male (781b), one would not have been surprised to find some sexual differentiation of penalties in Magnesia. But there is none. Plato neither prescribes nor forbids it—except in one passage, in which he manages to do both.⁵² Men down to the age of thirty, and women down to the age of forty, are punished for neglect of parents (father and mother indifferently) by whipping and imprisonment; after that age, the penalties are open-ended. Plato stresses that these corporal penalties to be inflicted on political 'minors'—i.e. those not yet of full citizen standing, and not yet able to hold office (see Morrow 1939:52)—should be the 'same' for females as for the males; the differentiation comes at the ages at which such penalties cease to apply. Is there an implication that normally penalties for women will be different? If so, more severe or less severe? Or is the point merely that corporal punishment for a woman is a savagery, but that nevertheless in the interests of sexual equality it has to be inflicted? If so, equality is in this case *not* a benefit to the woman. But the crucial point is that, at any age except between thirty and forty, exactly the same penalties apparently apply to both sexes—though of course given the wide discretion

allowed to Magnesian courts,⁵³ one could never be sure of final outcomes (e.g. a more severe whipping for one sex than for the other might be ordered by the jury). Perhaps the most natural implication is that punishments are normally the same, and that the rule is to be followed even in this case.

The same opposing inferences can be drawn from two passages in which women are specifically included as jurors in special family courts that have to be convened in intra-familial cases of woundings in anger, and in proposals to disinherit a son.⁵⁴ I know of no parallels to these courts in Athens. Are women mentioned in order to make it quite clear that their role as jurors applies here too? Or simply because these contexts are exceptional, and they are *not* normally to act as jurors?

On the other hand, there is one respect in which the penal code fails to integrate both wife and husband fully into their family. Plato rates blood relationships higher than other familial relationships.⁵⁵ Wounding with intent to kill is normally punished by permanent exile; when the victim is the parent or sibling (or indeed master: 876e ff.) of the killer, the penalty is death; this extra severity does *not* apply to murder of spouse by spouse, presumably because they are not related by blood: the penalty is only exile. Apparently similarly, woundings in anger as between relatives are punished merely by the payment of damages; woundings in anger of parents by offspring may be punished by death (878c ff.); but woundings as between spouses are not even mentioned, let alone accorded special status—though how spouses could pay each other damages is of course hard to see. Again similarly, while voluntary murder of one's father, mother, brothers or children attracts the penalty not merely of death but of death with various grisly enhancements, murder of spouse by spouse apparently does not: the enhancements, notably the throwing of stones at the head of the executed body, are not to apply (873a ff.). In all these terrible criminal relationships, neither spouse is specially protected against the other, only against blood relatives.

A rather different concern with blood appears in the regulation (930de) about the offspring of unions between slave and free. They are *always* to follow the *deterior condicio* (worse/lower status)—a far harsher rule than any known historically (Morrow 1939:90–4).

CONCLUSION

The complete range of evidence for the status and role of women in Magnesia paints a complex picture, and in some respects an obscure one. It is obvious that Plato's proposals, individually and in sum, flow from his special social and political assumptions and policies, not from any spirit of women's liberation. On that cliché I do not wish to dwell. Nor do I think that Charles Kahn's cautious conclusion (1961:422), that 'the equality of women is proposed again, though never fully worked out', does justice to Plato's peculiar political strategy. This is, however, a topic that would deserve a chapter to itself. I must, therefore, be dogmatic.

In the *Republic*, Plato sketched a state positioned at one extreme on the scale of political maturity, in that it was under the untrammelled control of persons acting in the light of advanced metaphysical knowledge of moral values. These persons

were, indifferently, men and women. For Plato's policy was functional and pragmatic: women are not essentially or invariably inferior to men in intellect and capacity to rule; therefore let suitable females be chosen as Guardians, on the same terms as males. The incorporation of selected women into political decision-making and control was thus total. Now in so far as Plato incorporates into the educational structure and the social life of Magnesia not just a female intellectual elite, but *all* citizen women, whatever their intellect, by means of the provisions regarding the academic and artistic syllabus, the military training and the common meals, he is attempting to express in practical terms, with pragmatic abatements appropriate to a second-best Utopia, the ideal female role and status outlined in the *Republic* (cf. Osborne 1975:450–1). The problem is to know whether women may hold major *political* office.

At this stage, it is easy to commit a fatal error. It is a kind of 'documentary fallacy'. It is to suppose that Magnesia is an exact blueprint, fixed in all its details; and that if something is unclear we have only to inspect the text closely enough to discover a precise Platonic provision lurking between the lines. That is not so: Magnesia is a shifting structure. Plato is to some extent his own worst enemy in this respect. His suspicion of innovation, and his denunciation of change (797a ff.), can all too readily give the impression that Magnesia's institutions are inflexible, to be taken or left as a whole, without any modification at all. But in fact he makes it very clear that they simply stand at one point on a *sliding scale* of political maturity. Magnesia incorporates all sorts of tensions within itself, for example between election and lot, rich and poor, oligarchical inequality and democratic equality, between discretion and the letter of the law, between private life and public life. Hence the structure he sketches is, like all political structures, capable of improvement; it embodies aspirations.⁵⁶ He would prefer communism of property and families to the private property and families of Magnesia; but these would themselves become an aspiration if something even less desirable had to be tolerated (739a–e). The study of what looks like the theory of Forms by the Nocturnal Council is an aspiration to the metaphysical underpinning of the *Republic* (963a ff.). His laws about sexual conduct envisage that both a higher and a lower standard than the one he sketches are possible (841a–842a). He is apparently prepared to undertake sociological investigation to discover the ingrained moral and social views of prospective and actual Magnesians.⁵⁷ Such information will enable him to frame laws embodying the best possible standards of conduct, laws which are thus not arbitrary, but, if circumstances change, not fixed either. Finally, Magnesia is not a 'closed' society: it has arrangements to enable it to learn from foreign sources how to improve itself.⁵⁸

Suppose that some emissary from the Academy has visited Magnesia several years after its foundation, and reports to Plato as follows: 'Look here, Plato, if I may make so bold, your *Laws* were the inspiration for the setting up of Magnesia. The women have settled down well in the private families—it is a system that everyone is familiar with, and has given the state the stability it needs—and they are successfully playing a fullish part in the life of their society: they are well educated, they are valued members of the armed forces and their *sussitia* are running well. As you required (951ab), they hold to their laws not just by habit, but by *understanding* them, *gnosei*. They fill minor offices well: why not let them fill major ones too? But your

Laws is ambiguous on the point.’ Plato would surely reply, ‘My dear fellow, I have quite forgotten what I wrote in that dreadful work—it was rather long, as I remember. But if the Magnesians think the step would be a useful one, I can only cheer them on. It will bring their state somewhat nearer the *Republic*, after all. My advice to them is to adopt the principle of *economy* in the modification of that ideal.’

I am in short suggesting that the right question is not, ‘Did Plato intend women to hold office in Magnesia?’, as if the answer had to be disjunctive, yes or no, but ‘*Would* he have intended it, once convinced it was feasible?’ On his own functional and pragmatic premises, he would surely have regarded any state in which women hold major office successfully as a better state than one in which they do not. In Magnesia, by accident or design, he is not clear whether he envisages it; but he has at any rate left the door open, and would surely be very happy to see the Magnesians walk through it.

NOTES

- 1 The major exception is Gernet 1951:clxiv–clxix, to which parts of this chapter owe a good deal.
- 2 804d–805b, cf. 764d. Curiously, at 805a7 Plato prescribes that men are to follow the same pursuits as women: the drift of the passage is the other way round.
- 3 805d3, cf. d1, d7, 806b1. On *koinonia* in the *Republic*, see Fortenbaugh 1975:1–2.
- 4 In my Penguin translation I rashly printed ‘everything else’; so too Cohen 1987:35. His rendering, ‘the completest association’, obscures the restriction of *boti malista*; cf. other limiting expressions, 743c, 794c8–d1, 814a5, c2–3.
- 5 As at 802a, where *enkomia* of the meritorious dead are to be composed both for men and for women. So too at 794d–795d, a plea for ambidexterity, which seems to be a ‘coded’ argument that male and female do not differ by nature (d6, e1–2, a5, d5), and that the potential of both should be cultivated equally. Saxonhouse’s interpretation (1985:59) of this passage seems to me topsy-turvy.
- 6 658d brackets even educated women with young lads and the general public in point of literary taste. *Critias* 110bc treats military virtue as common to both sexes, but does not say that each may acquire it to the same degree; cf. *Republic* 455d. On this point as applied to women in the *Republic*, see Fortenbaugh 1975; cf. Garside 1971:534–7.
- 7 E.g. 792de, 816e, 838d.
- 8 E.g. 694de, 731d, 790ab, 817c, 909e, 917a, 934e, 944d–945a, cf. 637c; also Aristophanes *Eccl.* 237–8, *Lys.* 11–12. On the Greek metaphors for women and their lifestyle, see Gould 1980:53; note 839a, female ‘land’, in which children are ‘sown’. Plato takes a dim view of a woman’s physiology: *Timaeus* 42a–d, 90e–91d, cf. 76e; but Greek views of female physiology were in general determined not by empirical investigation of the female body but on the observed (and desiderated) social and sexual behaviour of women.
- 9 795d; mathematics can improve nature: 747b, cf. 961b and n. 18.
- 10 A register of dates of boys *and* girls will be kept, perhaps in family shrines, perhaps in the phratries (the punctuation of the passage is uncertain). In either case females are formally registered as members of the community; but the implications for

- office-bearing are entirely obscure. Cf. Gernet 1951:cxiv–cxv, Morrow 1960:126–8, Gould 1980:41 n. 24.
- 11 783e ff.; cf. 794b, 930a, c; 932b.
 - 12 741c, 759a ff., 800b, 828b (priestesses); 764d (supervisors of girls in schools(?)); 813c (assistants to Director of Education); 794ab (supervisors of nurses in schools); 795d (supervisors of children's *play*, whereas male supervisors supervise their *lessons*); 806e presidents of the females' common meals. Given the social and moral importance Plato attaches to the conduct of these meals, this last office may not be as minor as it looks.
 - 13 See Gernet 1951:cxvi; cf. Stalley 1983:105–6.
 - 14 Nothing about female rights can be inferred from the word *politides* in c4, 'female citizens'; cf. Aristotle *Politics* 1275a14–23.
 - 15 829d4 ff.; cf. 830de. Persons not so licensed to compose unsupervised must confine themselves to compositions already existing and approved.
 - 16 See D.A.Russell, *CR* 12 (1962), 42; cf. *Rep.* 452a. 796c specifies armed dancing for boys and girls.
 - 17 834a2–3, cf. 813e7–8.
 - 18 On nature and habit, cf. similar language at *Republic* 395d; cf. n. 9.
 - 19 The final words of the sentence, 'particularly with a view to the use of arms', may be intended to apply to either sex alone or to both.
 - 20 740b ff., 783e ff., 930c.
 - 21 Their wombs will be past the peak of lust to procreate, *Timaeus* 91b–d.
 - 22 Possibly for the reason indicated in Lysias I.8: the danger to morals caused by their appearing in public. For ordinary funerals, Plato seems content to follow 'the law on such matters', 959e; it is impossible to know what this means, but cf. Demosthenes XLIII.62.
 - 23 737e–738a, 739e ff., 745e, 775b–776a, 923c.
 - 24 775e–776b, 808ab, 783b ff. 608e2 and 690a3 recognize *parental* rule by a mother as characteristic of primitive societies.
 - 25 741e, 842c–850d, 918a–920c.
 - 26 On the degree of seclusion of Athenian women, see Cohen 1990.
 - 27 779d ff., 788ab, 839cd; for a discussion, see David 1978. The messes for men and women are separate, and the latter are presided over by women (806e, and see n. 12). Cf. 828c, where only *some* women's festivals are held separately from men's. On women's gossip, arising in a milieu somewhat separate from that of men, see Gould 1980:49.
 - 28 II.iii, cf. 1262b 14–17.
 - 29 Okin 1979:44. On Okin's view of the relation in the *Republic* between women's role as Guardians and the abolition of the Guardians' private families, see Jacobs 1978.
 - 30 739b–740a, 807b, cf. 923a.
 - 31 740c, 771e–772a, 772d–773e, 774e, 923e, 924d, 925a–925d; Lacey 1968:105–9, Just 1989:45–50.
 - 32 Cf. 721a, 771e, marriage as a *koinonia*, partnership; also 839ab, *Odyssey*, VI.180–5, Xen. *Symp.*, VIII.3, on affection for wives; cf. Gould 1980:49–50, Morrow 1960:121, 439 and 636c on the 'natural' pleasure of heterosexual intercourse. Interestingly, an entitlement of male to rule female is *not* among the seven entitlements to rule recognized at 690a ff. But 917a clearly states that males are 'superior' to women and children; cf. *Rep.* 563ab, and of course Aristotle, e.g. *Politics* 1254b13–14.
 - 33 Cf. Plut. *Lyc.* XIV, 2. John Aubrey, in his 'Brief Life' of Sir Thomas More, relates the

following story. 'In his *Utopia* his lawe is that the young people are to see each other starknaked before marriage. Sir William Roper, of Eltham, in Kent, came one morning, pretty early, to my Lord, with a proposall to marry one of his daughters. My Lord's daughters were then both together abed in a truckle-bed in their father's chamber asleep. He carries Sir William into the chamber and takes the Sheete by the corner and suddenly whippes it off. They lay on their Backs, and their smocks up as high as their arme-pitts. This awakened them, and immediately they turned on their bellies. Quoth Roper, I have seen them both sides, and so gave a patt on the buttock, he made choice of, sayeing, Thou art mine. Here was all the trouble of wooeing.'

- 34 924c ff. *Mutatis mutandis*, apparently the same rules apply also to the daughters who are not *epikleroi*. On *epikleroi*, see Lacey 1968:139–45, Just 1989:95–8.
- 35 On procedure in Athens when the nearest male relative is married already, see Lacey 1968:142–4.
- 36 Gernet (1951:clxvii) points out that in Gortyn the 'heiress' had an 'initiative personelle' in all cases, a freedom which may or may not have influenced Plato; see Gortyn Code VII. 52 ff. Karabelias 1983:185–90 analyses the complex and possibly confused regulations at 924c ff., and argues that the list of prescribed males is more restricted than at Athens, because of the near-elimination of one side of the family, the cognates, in favour of agnates only. Magnesian *epikleroi* might therefore be faced with personal choices rather sooner than a reading of the regulations would suggest.
- 37 925d–926d; cf. Plut. *Solon* XX, 2, 4–5.
- 38 Demosthenes XLVI.18. See Harrison 1968:19, 110, 136–7.
- 39 774e, a good example of the starkness of many of Plato's laws: he does not give his reasons for departing from Athenian practice, but leaves us to divine them.
- 40 (1951:clxvi); cf. Becker 1932:10, 181–2.
- 41 Pace Gernet 1951:clxvi n.1: see 929b2 with b7. Note also the inclusion of the female line at 766c, 871 b and 877d.
- 42 742c, 774c–e. On Athenian law, see MacDowell 1978:87–8, Lacey 1968:109–10. Cf. 923d: a betrothed female should not inherit from her father's estate (nor should a son who has a home, i.e. has been adopted into some other estate).
- 43 Cf. Plut. *Solon* 20. So too funerals: 958d ff.; the rich woman who deserves an expensive funeral at 719de will not be living in Magnesia.
- 44 734bc, 929e–930b. The Athenian divorce legislation is handily summarized in Harrison 1968:39–44 and MacDowell 1978:88.
- 45 Because of distress caused by the frustrated desires of the womb (*Timaieus* 91bc)?
- 46 930bc; Harrison 1968:38, MacDowell 1978:88–9.
- 47 The texts are many, complex and controversial; Lysias I.29–36 is central. See especially Harrison 1968:32–8, Lacey 1968:113–16, MacDowell 1978:88, 124–5, Cohen 1984, Cole 1984, Harris 1990, Saunders 1991:246–8, Cantarella and Foxhall 1991.
- 48 835d–842a, cf. 636cd. Homosexuality of either kind is strongly discouraged, as 'unnatural'. The regulations at 841c–e deal with sexual relations with courtesans etc., 'hired or obtained by other means'; only if the affairs become known do they attract a penalty, which is 'disqualification (*atimon*) from praises in the state' (whatever that means): the offender is effectively an 'alien'. No such official sanctions were brought to bear on Athenian men.
- 49 874c; references and discussion as in n. 47.
- 50 Todd 1990 describes the functions of witnesses and supporting speakers; on women, see 26 n. 12, 28, and MacDowell 1963:101–9; but cf. Lacey 1968:174, Harrison 1971:136–7, 150–3, Just 1989:33–9, Sealey 1990:43. Todd's central thesis is that

- ‘Witnessing in Athenian law is a ritualised socio-political act of support’ (27), rather than the mere offering of factual testimony. The witness was subject to a suit for false witness, *dike pseudomarturion*, by the opposing side; the evidentiary *oath*, however, which was not so subject, was indeed taken by women in Athenian courts. For a review of the ways in which women could *effectively* testify, see Bonner 1905:32–4.
- 51 Athenian law prescribed damages for false witness, for the first offence; Plato is silent on the point, *possibly* because women would not have the independent means to pay. Cf. Saunders 1991:330–2.
- 52 932bc, which I failed to note in my 1991:216. 882b *may* prescribe sexual equality, both for victims and punished aggressors, in the law of assault; but the range of its reference is not clear.
- 53 862de, 875d ff., 933e–934c; cf. 766e.
- 54 878cd, 929ab.
- 55 For a full account, see Cosenza 1987.
- 56 Cf. 745e ff., 858a; hence expressions like ‘as much as possible’: see refs in n. 4. Cf. the way in which things in this world may approximate to the perfection of the Forms less or more.
- 57 Cf. Saunders 1986:207–8; 736e–737a and 743e indicate the importance of social and moral belief in a population.
- 58 951a–952d, 953cd.

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INDEX



Greek names are Hellenized wherever possible: thus ‘Alkaios’, ‘Boiotia’, ‘Herakles’, ‘Orkhomenos’, but ‘Mycenae’ and ‘Thucydides’. (Where both the Anglicized and the Hellenized forms have been used, the Anglicized form appears in square brackets.)

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